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Schimmelpennino

ZMTV

SELECT MEMOIRS
OF
PORT ROYAL,

TO WHICH ARE APPENDED

TOUR TO ALET; ^{by D. de la Harpe} VISIT TO PORT ROYAL; GIFT OF AN
ABBESS; BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES. &c.

Taken from Original Documents.

BY
M. A. SCHIMMELPENNINCK.

FOURTH EDITION.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
HAMILTON, ADAMS, & CO. PATERNOSTER - ROW.

1835.



PREFACE TO THE FOURTH EDITION.

IN presenting the fourth edition of the “Select Memoirs of Port Royal” to the public, the author wishes to express, that she shall indeed rejoice if this little work may be the means of diffusing amongst her Protestant brethren, an acquaintance not only with the truly dedicated individuals, whose biography forms the subject of its pages ; but of impressing them with a deep conviction, of the futility of merely notional christianity ; and of the importance of not only assenting to divine truth, but of having it implanted by the spirit in the heart and soul ; so that,—a circulation of the living sap of Christ, the only true vine,—it may bear its fruit abundantly unto life eternal. “ *Every plant which my heavenly father hath not planted shall be rooted up.*” O that not only the seed sown, may be the genuine word of God, but that it may be sown by the hand of the divine husbandman himself, and watered by the dew from heaven. If in the perusal of the memoirs of Port Royal, Protestant readers may think they often have occasion to thank our Lord for superior light, have we not also continually cause to prostrate ourselves at his feet in deep compunction and

shame, at our very far inferior diligence and fidelity? At our very far inferior degree of spirituality, and of abiding communion with Christ? and our very far less single eye and close walk with him. O that neither the author, or readers of this work, might ever rest content with merely visiting their Lord, as occasional and transient guests; but that we might, like David, *desire to dwell in the house of the Lord for ever*; and to *abide continually under the shadow of the Almighty*.

The author would rejoice too if this little work might also be the means of promoting a gospel charity for the very numerous members dispersed in the Roman Catholic church, and other churches, who truly love and hope in the cross of Christ, and are led by the spirit of Christ. She also wishes, that it might be a means of stirring up a lively and affectionate zeal in their behalf, to spread the holy scriptures, and to diffuse that more full and distinct apprehension, and more fervent love of gospel truth amongst them, which may effectually emancipate them from those human bonds, and those traditions of men, which though they did not enthrall, yet, in a considerable degree, encumbered and perplexed the course, of even the excellent Port Royalists.

O that the spirit of our Lord, the real love of souls, reigned of a truth amongst his professed followers. That mind of Christ, equally remote from the narrowness which rejects all who fall

beneath a certain standard, as from the culpable indifference for our brethren's welfare, which lies at the root of indiscriminate and miscalled liberality.

O had we that mind of Christ, that christian love, which *believeth all things*, which *hopeth all things*, and which *endureth all things*, and which *rejoiceth in the truth*; how should we with open arms, receive all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth; even amidst the multitude of ignorances, misapprehensions, errors, and even as yet uncorrected sins remaining; where the true leaven has been received, but before it has diffused itself so widely as to leaven the whole lump! But we should receive and retain them, not to make a compromise of the truth, or to wink at their errors, or to let them remain in ignorance; but to cherish, to instruct, to correct, to amend; like the good shepherd; who not only seeks his sheep in the dark mountains; but who heals the diseases, binds up what is broken, and carries the tender lambs, who cannot yet walk, in his bosom.

Never let us forget, that long after they were enrolled amongst the disciples of Christ, Peter denied him; and John and James would have called down fire from heaven, to burn up a village of the Samaritans; and the same disciples, even in the immediate view of their master's sufferings, disputed amongst themselves for precedence.

Yet little as they knew the spirit they were of ; did our Lord therefore reject them ? No, he bore with them. He gave a kind assurance of his regard, immediately on his resurrection, to the one ; and commended his mother, whilst on the cross, to the other. He taught them more perfectly ; and the one who denied him, boldly followed his divine Master in the painful death of the cross. St. John who had desired to destroy the Samaritans, was favored to be the Apostle especially setting forth divine love ; and St. James, who so earnestly contended for pre-eminence, became the especial contemner of worldly distinctions and honors.

May the author be permitted to add one concluding observation.

In the following pages, two religious societies are presented to the notice of the reader.

The one is that of the pious monks of La Trappe ; the other that of the Port Royalists.

Both these societies we have reason to believe, were equally devoted. Both loved the Lord who bought them ; and each was faithful, so far as it may be said of human beings, to the light they had.

So far they agreed ; but in one respect, they materially differed. The rule of the Trappists led them to be intent on a multitude of observances, which, however instituted by great men, are after all but the tradition of men ; whereas that of the

Port Royalists required of its members a diligent, a continual, and a prayerful study of that written word of truth, which God has set forth, as the outward testimony of Jesus, as the delineation of his life on earth, as a lamp to the feet, and a light to the path of his disciples, as the revealer of the everlasting covenant of peace ; as the witness, the accomplishment of redemption, and as the charter of the church's privileges, and of her everlasting inheritance. And thus, the Port Royalists diligently and prayerfully looked to the spirit of God, not as the substitute for, but the divine interpretation and personal application of, the written word.

Hence we shall find a corresponding difference in the results. The Port Royalists were not only burning, but *shining* lights. They had not only divine vitality ; but were instruments of diffusing light extensively to others. They were far better instructed, far more useful in their generation, and far greater blessings in their own church than any society can be who rejects the diligent use of the means God has appointed for knowing his will, and learning the privileges he has bestowed.

Those indeed who have not the spirit of Christ are none of his, for Christ in his people is alone the hope of glory, yet the great contrast between the devoted Trappists, and equally devoted, but far better instructed, Port Royalists might perhaps serve as a striking comment on the declara-

tion that he whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates in his law day and night, can alone be expected to be as the tree planted by the rivers of water, and bringing forth his fruit in his season.

M. A. SCHIMMELPENNINCK.

September, 1834.

PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION.

THE Select Memoirs of Port Royal, are intended to present to the public a succinct sketch of the rise, progress, and extinction of that celebrated religious and literary institution. The work is a re-arranged, and very greatly extended edition of one published some years ago, under the title of “A Tour to Alet.” With the exception of a few notes, it includes the whole, both of that work, and of the “Narrative of the Demolition of Port Royal,” with various additions in the account of that institution, occupying considerably more than a third of the present work. These additions rendered the former name inappropriate. The appellation of “SELECT MEMOIRS” was adopted, because these volumes have no pretensions to be a continued literary or ecclesiastical history of Port Royal, but rather present a brief sketch, necessary to connect various anecdotes, biographic sketches, sentiments, or letters, which the author conceived might prove interesting or edifying, to readers of religious tastes and habits. The two former editions having been for some years out of print, and the author having been repeatedly solicited to give another, wished to make it more worthy of perusal, by considerable biographical and other additions. They were not only begun, but were

nearly brought to a close some years ago ; when a long continued state of ill health, and the pressure of afflicting circumstances, precluded the final completion and arrangement, till the present time.

The edition commences by two introductory biographical sketches ; viz, that of the life of the celebrated Jean du Verger de Hauranne, Abbé de St. Cyran ; and of his friend Jansenius, Bishop of Ypres ; the latter of whom was the reviver in the catholic church, of those doctrines of grace, which are so similar to those now often termed evangelical, amongst protestants. The former was the director, under whose guidance they were introduced at Port Royal.

These two notices, so closely interwoven with the history of that monastery, are succeeded by an introduction, chiefly written by N. Fontaine, after the final dispersion of the recluses, most of whom he survived : occasional additions have been made, principally from the Abbé Gazagnes, and the author of the “*Gemissemens*,” who wrote after the final destruction of the monastery.

Then come the Select Memoirs. They are compiled from the numerous general histories of Port Royal ; combined with its still more multiplied private memoirs, letters, necrologies, relations of persecutions, constitutions, manuals, and treatises of piety.

The Select Memoirs are succeeded by a little account of an excursion which the author took to Port Royal des Champs, in the course of a tour to

Amsterdam, Utrecht, Amersfort, Brussels, Louvain, and Paris, immediately after the peace of 1814: when she had an opportunity under the kind direction of a venerable and celebrated bishop, and of several clergy of Jansenist principles, of making a very extensive collection of their works. From this collection, the present publication is compiled; all the foregoing pieces were composed with a view to publication.

In conclusion follow the “Tour to Alet,” and as a companion to it, a specimen of a book of la Mère Agnès Arnauld, entitled “la Religieuse Parfaite.” Neither of these two last pieces were written for the press; and neither of them are to be considered as translations of the works, on which they purport to be founded.

The “Tour to Alet,” consists of those parts of Dom Lancelot’s Tour, which were translated for the author’s amusement, expanded by information obtained from other authentic sources on the same subjects; and interwoven with the tour, instead of being appended in notes. It was retained, because this edition purports to include a reprint of the last; and because, though not a literal translation of Lancelot, it contains much curious information, from other equally valuable sources; besides which, the subject and the writer closely connected it with Port Royal.

The specimen of the “Religieuse Parfaite,” was written for the author’s private edification; much in the same way as the “Tour to Alet” was, for her private amusement. It is a translation

of part of the “*Religieuse Parfaite* ;” in which passages which appeared irrelevant to protestant readers are omitted ; and others are occasionally expanded, often indeed, by other parts of la Mère Agnès’s works.

These two last pieces, however, though not translations, are so completely borrowed from the Port Royal writers, that it was thought they might prove interesting ; one as a specimen of the writings of the male, the other of the female members of that institution : and above all that they might prove acceptable from their own merit. Both were written by their venerable authors nearly about the same period.

The whole work closes with biographical notices and elucidations, from various sources. The account of James the Second’s Visit to la Trappe, from the life of the Abbé de Rancé, by Marsollier, would have been inserted in the body of Dom Lancelot’s tour ; but that it took place at a very considerably later period than that at which he wrote.

Having stated the sources, from which the Select Memoirs of Port Royal are compiled ; the author wishes to add, that being amply furnished with the means, pains have not been spared to render them correct and authentic : and she must state that those persons have been much mistaken, who imagine it to be a work of fiction, founded only upon fact ; and she invites persons having supposed so, to read the Port Royal general histories and memoirs, to be convinced of their mistake.

One other observation must be made. In the course of this work, four or five circumstances are related, one of which will be universally considered as *absolutely* incredible; and the others as marvellous. This the author is aware of, but, as in every instance, the history hinged upon them, she did not think herself at liberty to depart from her authorities.

In doing full justice to the virtues of these excellent persons, the author felt herself bound not to turn out of her way, to conceal the popular opinions of the period, and of the church to which Port Royal belonged. It should be recollected that miraculous interpositions were then more unhesitatingly admitted than they would be at present, and amongst protestants.

In the nineteenth century, the relation of Madame de Mongobert, and of that unknown visiter of Madame de Valois, would seem capable of a perfectly obvious solution.

The account of the miracle of the sacred thorn is given as a curiosity; its share in the history of Port Royal, and in that of Pascal, is too prominent to allow it to be suppressed. The materials are too intractable to be moulded into any thing approaching to human probability; it is therefore given, just as the author found it.

Finally the great extension of materials in this edition, and a wish not to increase beyond measure the size of the work; has obliged the author, both to print more lines in each page, and to cancel the references at the foot of the page, to

give room for the additional text. A list of the works referred to, with the titles annexed in full, is therefore subjoined. To the reader who wishes to refer to them, the author will observe; that the general histories (distinguished by an asterisk) form the foundation of each chapter, and are to be in the first place consulted; first, as to the history of the period of time spoken of, and secondly, by turning to the index, under the head of each character or place, mentioned in the chapter. Then the Memoirs, &c. &c. furnish the details on particular parts. Thus the Memoirs of du Fossé, Fontaine, and Lancelot, *chiefly* regard the recluses; the Memoirs of la Mère Angélique, and the M. des Anges, *Vies Edifiantes*, chiefly regard the nuns. The Nécrologies, &c. give accounts of each individual, And the *Relations of Port Royal* chiefly relate to their early, as the *Histoire de la Dernière Persecution* does to the latter persecution. With this clew it will not be difficult to refer to any particular passage.

The author wishes cordially, and respectfully to thank her subscribers; and hopes they may derive as much pleasure from the perusal of her work, as she has had in writing it.

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- Vie d'Antoine Singlin, directeur de Port Royal.

INTRODUCTION.

THE celebrated monastery of Port Royal is alike renowned for its religious and literary fame. The piety, learning, and elegance of its writers, equally combined to confer on it a distinction, perhaps, unexampled in so small a body of persons, and the epoch of whose existence scarcely exceeded one century.

The names of LANCELOT, and ARNAULD, the authors of the Port Royal Grammars, those of the pious historian ROLLIN, and the elaborate and accurate TILLEMONT; the ecclesiastical writers, FLEURY, and RACINE; the Institutes of DUGUET, the Tragedies of RACINE, the Provinciales, and Thoughts, of PASCAL, the Moral Essays of NICOLE, the Testament of QUESNEL, and the Bible of SACL, are indeed familiar to the English public, but whilst a few of the moral and literary works of the Jansenist school have attained their just celebrity in this country, their religious and biographical writers, though perhaps superior in value, have been comparatively little known: and the history of the celebrated Institution of Port Royal itself, that brilliant but brief light of Catholic Christendom, and of its martyrdom, through the persecution of the Jesuits, are still less so.

The protestant public is perhaps wholly ignorant that from the time of Henry IV. of France, to the end of the reign of Louis XIV. there existed in the bosom of the catholic church a learned and religious society, who distinctly taught justification by faith, and who were assiduously occupied in the universal dissemination of the Scriptures: still less are they aware that

with this persecuted body originated the *First Bible Society*, and that to them we owe that translation of the Scriptures which is considered above all others, not excepting our own admirable one, the most excellent, namely the French translation by M. le Maitre de Saci, which is that used by the British and Foreign Bible Society.

To introduce this venerable body of martyrs and confessors to the British public, is the object of the present work; though brief, it professes to be authentic: it is compiled from the cotemporary histories, biographies, relations, and letters of the Port Royalists themselves, a large collection of whose works the author possesses; having selected them on the continent during the peace of 1814. Amongst other libraries, the author visited that of the Jansenist College at Amersfort, those of Louvain, where Jansenius and St. Cyran, the fathers of Jansenism, studied; Brussels, which was the residence of the great Arnould, and Amsterdam, and Paris; where under the direction of a celebrated pastor of the Jansenist church in the one, and that of a venerable and learned Jansenist bishop in the other, a large collection of the religious, biographic, and historic works of the Port Royalists were collected.

The author trusts it will not prove unacceptable to the British public, especially the religious and literary part of it, to introduce to their acquaintance characters so eminent for christian holiness, and an institution so distinguished for literary celebrity. The author flatters herself likewise that to parents it will prove most valuable to be introduced to so large a field of French literature, equally distinguished for perfection of style, variety of object, and eminent piety, and hitherto, with the small exceptions mentioned, wholly unexplored by the English.

Last, but not least, the author trusts that the truly enlightened Protestant will rejoice at being presented with examples of eminent holiness in a church where his education may least have taught him to expect it. Nor will he less rejoice, as he sheds a tear over the fate of Port Royal, that he is himself privileged to live under a constitution, civil and religious, where the persecutions which levelled Port Royal to the dust, and scattered the ashes of her saints to the winds, can never take place.

May the perusal of this little work increase charity to our catholic brethren, but cause us more highly to prize, and more closely to hold fast our own brighter light and more extended privileges. And may we rise from it, asking ourselves, if such were the abundant fruits yielded under that dispensation, what ought to be those we should bring forth under one which we ourselves esteem to be so far superior ?

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PRELIMINARY BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF THE LIVES OF THE

ABBE DE ST. CYRAN, AND JANSENIUS.

JEAN DU VERGER* DE HAURANNE, the Abbé de St. Cyran, was born at Bayonne, in 1581. His family was both noble and ancient. The Du Vergers originally came from Thoulouse. Two brothers of that name were appointed by the king to establish a mint at Bayonne. The family afterwards divided into three branches. The eldest subsisted at Bayonne long after the destruction of Port Royal. It is mentioned by Lancelot, in his *Mémoires de St. Cyran*, as one of the most considerable in the place. The third centered in an heiress of immense wealth, who intermarried with the noble house of Urthubie. The second branch was engaged in extensive commercial concerns. From it sprung M. Jean du Vergier, afterwards the celebrated Abbé de St. Cyran.

M. du Vergier, although heir to the estate of Hauranne, received an academical education. He

* Indifferently spelt Verger or Vergier, by different Authors.

accomplished his studies with great distinction at the Universities both of Paris and Louvain.

In 1620, M. Du Vergier was appointed to the abbacy of the monastery of St. Cyran (or Seriganus.) This benefice was resigned to him by Henry de la Rochepozay, Bishop of Poitiers, under whom he officiated as Grand Vicar, and who was also his zealous patron.

The Abbé de St. Cyran had formed one early and intimate friendship. Cornelius Jansenius was only four years younger than himself. Both had been educated at Louvain. The similarity of their pursuits, and a coincidence of circumstances, cemented an union which their mutual piety had at first formed.

The health of Jansenius had suffered by intense application. He was advised on leaving college to try the air of France. The house of M. de St. Cyran, at Bayonne, was soon opened to him. Both parties embraced with pleasure so favorable an opportunity of continuing their intimacy. Although their education was completed, the ardour of each for improvement was unabated. They applied themselves to the study of the Fathers. Their assiduity was unremitting, their researches were extensive. The industry which distinguished their theological studies, was alone exceeded by their perseverance and fervour in prayer. The foundation of their subsequent greatness was laid in a deep sense of their own insufficiency, accompanied by a firm reliance on divine goodness and power.

But the chief foundation of the exalted piety which distinguished M. de St. Cyran, was laid in an unremitting study of the Holy Scriptures, and in the supereminent degree of reverence with which he regarded the word of God. M. Lancelot observes of him, “ One may justly say of this great servant of God, that the Holy Scripture was his sole treasure ; there he placed his heart, truly feeling in his own soul, the same disposition by which David confessed, that he loved the word of God beyond every treasure, or precious thing the world contained.” His manner too of reading Scripture was altogether holy. He often remarked, that in order to profit, Scripture must be read with a portion of the very same spirit by which it was written : with a deep prostration of heart, and with a supreme reverence for the Divine Majesty which resides there. Indeed, he had so supereminent a reverence for Holy Writ, that he continually told his disciples, they ought to read scarcely any thing else. “ The Fathers,” observed he, “ read the Scriptures alone, and we likewise, should find ALL there, if we in truth searched them as we ought. Every word in Scripture,” said he, “ deserves to be weighed more attentively than pieces of gold. The best method,” he used to say, “ of reading Scripture, is to do it simply, applying it to one’s own heart, and sedulously reducing it all to practice.”

In his after-life, M. de St. Cyran was still distinguished by the same reverence for the word of God. Many years afterwards, writing to a young


man newly converted, this devoted servant of God, uses the following remarkable expressions. “ God has various methods of drawing souls to himself. Yet I think you have cause to be particularly thankful, that your heart when it was first touched, was awakened by the words of CHRIST himself in the Gospel. For surely no means of conversion can be more apostolic, than that which is effected by the word of God. This is the great means of conversion, which God himself has appointed. By the sole distribution and dispersion of the Scriptures it is, that God has converted, and still does convert, both Jews and Pagans. The Scriptures are the grand instrument by which God originally founded his church, and by which he still continually reforms, maintains, and augments it.”

Besides the perusal of the Scriptures, which he urged upon all his disciples, he was also well versed himself in the writings of the Fathers, and entertained a high reverence for them. Nevertheless he always preserved inviolate, the wide distance which ought to separate every human composition from the supreme veneration due to Divine revelation. The first, indeed, were frequently the objects of his studies ; but the latter alone continually formed the sole subject of his prayers and meditations. He often observed, “ that the Holy Scriptures had been penned by the *direct* beam of the holy Spirit ; the works of the Father (excellent as they were) only by the *reflex* ray emanating therefrom.” Amongst all the books of Holy

Writ, those on which he most constantly meditated were those of the New Testament, but more especially the four Gospels. For he often said, that St. Paul had drawn all his principles, and even his ideas from the Gospels ; and that if they were attentively perused, the germ of all the apostolical writings might be discovered there.

M. de St. Cyran used to recommend it to his disciples, daily to study the Scriptures on their knees. “JESUS CHRIST himself,” said he, “has written nothing : shewing us thereby, that the sublimity of godliness, can only be worthily represented by the living actions of his mortal life ; of which the evangelists have traced us a faithful picture. The Gospels, therefore, may be said to be a monument as eternal as the Eucharist. The one of which is destined to shew forth our Lord’s death for all, and the other his life for all, even until the day of his coming.”

The profound erudition for which they were afterwards so celebrated, they never pursued as an ultimate object. It was a means to something better, not an end. To renew the heart by a thorough conversion from all creatures to the Creator ; to enlighten the spiritual understanding by the study, not of human opinions, but of revealed truth ; these were the two grand objects of M. de St. Cyran and of his friend. These were their motives in studying the works of men whose reputation for sanctity the church has so long acknowledged. These ends too they thought mutually assisted each other. All that knowledge of



religious truth which is really spiritually discerned, must kindle divine love in the heart ; and whenever divine love is kindled in the heart, the spiritual understanding will be opened to the perception of divine truth. The word of God never separates genuine spiritual light from genuine spiritual heat. Hence, perhaps, it was that they adopted their favorite motto, “ *Unde ardet unde lucet.*” They only wished to be shining lights, from the heat by which they were burning lights.

Perhaps it was the conformity of their minds, as well as a similar degree of growth in grace, which led them to view the writings of the Fathers in the same light. However this may be, at that period it was they mutually adopted that system afterwards so celebrated under the name of Jansenism. With which of them it originated would be difficult to decide. By the world it was ascribed to Jansenius, because it was first made public by his commentary on St. Austin.

By M. de St. Cyran and his friend, this system was not considered as their own, but as the fundamental doctrine of the christian church. They imagined themselves amongst the small number who faithfully adhered to St. Augustine, in the midst of a corrupt and degenerate age.

The object of this little work is not controversial. Even were it so, it would not be possible to give an accurate delineation of this celebrated system in the short compass of a note. Will the following compendious definition be accepted? It is cursory, and far from accurate. Yet it will pro-

bably present a sufficiently clear view of the subject to a merely general reader. Jansenism may then be said to be in doctrine the Calvinism, and in practice the Methodism of the Romish church.

Both the Genevese reformer and the Bishop of Ypres derived their sentiments from the same source. Both ascribed their system to St. Austin; though each adopted it under different modifications. Again, both the disciples of Jansenius, and the most strict orders amongst modern dissenters, used to be distinguished for the complete renunciation of the world, under its three grand branches, as described by St. John, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. Both have been remarked for being in prayer, in watchings, and in fastings oft. In many respects indeed the comparison does not apply.

After six years of close study, M. de St. Cyran and Jansenius separated. The latter returned to Louvain; the former established himself at Paris. After an interval of some years, Jansenius was elected to the see of Ypres, of which he was seventh bishop.

M. de St. Cyran meanwhile gained an extensive reputation at Paris. His simple, mortified air, and his humble garb, formed a striking contrast with the awful sanctity of his countenance, the holiness of his demeanour, and his native lofty dignity of manner. The Parisians were struck with astonishment. M. de St. Cyran was especially eminent for that force of character, by which men of strong minds, silently but certainly govern those of weak

ones: His appearance no sooner arrested the eye, than his character began to gain a powerful but irresistible ascendancy over the mind and heart. Every one felt the strength of this influence, and the conscience of each bore witness that it came from God: Holy, wise, and strictly sincere, none could know him and not feel the value of such an adviser. Gentle, courteous, and discreet, few could be with him without wishing to repose their confidence in so valuable a friend. On the other hand, a perfect calmness and self-possession, a coolness, equally the result of native strength of character, and of a heart elevated above sublunary things, a certain elevation in his manners, equally the result of temperament and of education, inspired even his nearest friends with a reverential deference. His firm and penetrating eye, and his majestic countenance, are adverted to by most of his biographers. Lancelot mentions this expression as peculiarly striking, even after his death. “The corpse,” said he, “was so full of gravity and solemn majesty, that even his enemies must have been seized with awe on beholding it.” M. de St. Cyran’s deep self-knowledge gave him equal penetration in discovering, and patience in bearing the infirmities of others. He united the rare talents of being a most discerning, and yet a most wise and faithful director. He was resorted to on every hand as a spiritual guide.

Nor was M. de St. Cyran esteemed alone by the religious. The polite and learned equally valued his society and attainments. Cardinal Richelieu, whilst Bishop of Luçon, had known him at Poitiers.


At that early period he had justly appreciated M. de St. Cyran's merits. He now introduced him at court as the most deeply learned man in Europe. His celebrity daily increased. Eight bishopricks were successively offered him. It was not however preferment which M. de St. Cyran sought.

He industriously shrunk, on the contrary, from popular observation. The more fortune courted him, the more assiduously did he seek the shelter of obscurity.

Their early acquaintance had given him a thorough knowledge of the character of the minister. He received all Cardinal Richelieu's civilities with respect, but with firmness withstood his advances. He at the same time renounced all unnecessary visits.

M. de St. Cyran retired to a remote lodging opposite the convent of the Carthusians, where all his time was occupied in prayer, study, acts of charity, and spiritual direction. He was never to be met with at the tables of the great, nor was he visible in the streets, but on errands of piety or of mercy.

Though no more to be seen in society, the influence of M. de Cyran began to be sensibly felt. Effects originating in him were soon perceptible in every circle. The number of those under his direction had increased continually. The fruits of his instruction began to appear. His disciples were soon sufficiently considerable to fix the attention of the public. They were of that variety of description, that caused their influence to be felt in circles of every denomination.




In the midst of a capital distinguished for profligacy, a multitude of every class were suddenly seen to withdraw from the dissipations of the world, whilst they became doubly assiduous in every duty. Persons, pampered in luxury and self-indulgence, all at once became self-denying, abstemious, and temperate. Others, characterized by the lawless vices attendant on protracted civil wars, were in the course of a few months, distinguished for regularity, charity, humility, and gentleness. All of them became remarkable for unfeigned devotion, prayer, alms-deeds, and all the good fruits produced by a firm faith, working by zealous love. Persons were astonished at seeing even the manners and expression of countenance of their nearest relations wholly changed. Nor did this metamorphosis take place in a few instances only. Many in every rank and every order of society, seemed inspired by a new influence.

Religious houses, dignitaries in the church, private individuals, men of the first eminence in the faculty, the law, and the army; ministers of state, peers of the realm, princes of the blood royal; each could produce several out of their number, who began truly to fear and love God. Their savour began to be diffused all around.

About this time, M. de St. Cyran became acquainted with the celebrated monastery of Port Royal. M. Zamet, Bishop of Langres, had been induced by Louisa, first wife of the Duke of Longueville, to establish a religious house in honour of the blessed Eucharist. The abbess of Port Royal,

Marie Angélique Arnauld, was a lady greatly distinguished for the depth of her piety, and for her uncommon strength of mind. She had also acquired a great portion of celebrity by the astonishing reform she had recently established at Port Royal, and was then occupied in effecting, throughout a variety of religious houses of the same order. M. Zamet was persuaded he could not make choice of any person so well qualified to establish his new institution. The house was scarcely founded, when it was involved in numerous and unexpected difficulties, from the enmity which the Bishop of Sens entertained towards M. Zamet. M. de St. Cyran was unacquainted with either party. A small tract, said to be written by one of the new society, had been much handed about in Paris. It was entitled "*Chapelet secret du Saint Sacrement*," and consisted chiefly of prayers or spontaneous effusions of heart, on the blessed sacrament. It was characterized by much fervent piety on the one hand, whilst on the other, many passages were expressed with an enthusiasm, and an unguarded latitude, which rendered them susceptible of a malicious construction. This little work was in reality a private meditation, surreptitiously obtained from its author. M. de Sens most vehemently declared himself against it, and endeavoured in a little pamphlet which he published, to hold it up to the ridicule of the public. M. de St. Cyran had indeed perceived the unguarded expressions in the "*Chapelet secret*," but he also appreciated the deep piety which breathed through



the whole. Seeing that piety itself was attacked, he wrote a very able defence, which completely decided the public mind in favor of the work so much patronized by M. de Langres. The bishop was much pleased with the work. He introduced himself to its author, and the acquaintance, thus casually begun, soon improved into a high veneration and esteem. M. Zamet was soon after appointed to a post out of Paris. He requested M. de St. Cyran to direct the new institution in his absence. Other difficulties however arose, and a short time after, M. de Zamet's *Institut de St. Sacrement* was dropped. The nuns returned to Port Royal. They did not fail to speak of M. de St. Cyran's extraordinary merit. During his residence at Paris also, he had formed an intimacy with M. Arnauld D'Andilly, eldest brother to the abbess of Port Royal. He introduced M. de St. Cyran personally to his sister, the Rev. Mère Marie Angélique.

Such was the origin of M. de St. Cyran's acquaintance with Port Royal; he was soon after instituted director of that monastery, since so distinguished for talent, learning, and piety, and so persecuted, as the head-quarters of the reputed Jansenists.


At this period, however, the recent reform at Port Royal was the theme of general admiration. Both M. de St. Cyran and his followers appeared at this season to grow in favor equally with God and man.

The calm was not of long duration. About this period was announced the intention of Jansenius to

publish a translation of St. Austin, with an ample commentary. This celebrated work occupied its venerable author twenty years. On the very day of its completion he was seized with the plague, and expired.


The Jesuits had long entertained a secret enmity against the bishop of Ypres. Many years before, a contest had taken place between the Jesuits and the university of Louvain. Jansenius was, from his office in the university, deputed to plead in its behalf. Jansenius proved successful. It is said the Jesuits never forgave him. In their enmity to Jansenius, they soon included M. de St. Cyran, his early friend.

The dislike of the Jesuits was fomented also by the opposition of their theological sentiments. The Jesuits did not agree with the disciples of St. Austin, in holding the doctrines of grace. So far, no doubt, but many wise and good men might have united with them in opinion, though at the same time they would have shrunk from taking part in the persecutions by which it was afterwards maintained. Of this number it is well known was Fenelon. In another point likewise, the Jesuits differed from the friends of Jansenius. M. de St. Cyran was charged with having inculcated, that a mere abstinence from outward sin, from the dread of divine vengeance, was by no means a proof of genuine conversion. A deep sorrow for sin, arising from a genuine love of God, and an heartfelt grief for having offended him, were, he insisted, indispensably necessary to a truly evangelical repentance.



This the Jesuits observed was a heresy of the first magnitude. The writings of several of their doctors had demonstrated the love of God to be superfluous. Cardinal Richelieu, when bishop of Luçon, had written a catechism for the use of his diocese. This catechism maintained the same doctrines. Father Seguenot too, of the Oratoire, had recently been imprisoned in the Bastille, for asserting the love of God to be indispensably essential. Nor was this the only heresy alleged against M. de St. Cyran. He was accused of having asserted that the priest cannot in fact absolve from sin. He was said to have declared, that absolution and remission of sins belong to God alone. He indeed allowed that a competent discernment of spirits, was a grace conferred by the sacrament of ordination. He believed, therefore, that where the priest was truly faithful to the grace imparted, and only when he was so, he might (where an evangelical repentance and faith were evidenced by corresponding fruits) pronounce an absolution truly declaratory of the will of God. Otherwise and of itself, he believed it could not avail an impenitent sinner, to procure absolution from an unscrupulous priest. This heresy was esteemed of equal magnitude with the preceding.

The enmity which the Jesuits exhibited against M. de St. Cyran, was by no means attributed wholly to theological doctrines. Many ascribed a great part, if not the whole of their apparent religious zeal, to literary jealousy, and to personal pique.



The religious writers amongst the Jesuits had long been esteemed as bearing a decided pre-eminence. Several works had, however, lately appeared, which divided the public opinion. Although anonymous, they were soon traced to Port Royal. Others succeeded, equally distinguished for profound erudition, fervent piety, and classic elegance of style. A great sensation was produced on the mind of the public. “*Ils sont marques au coin de Port Royal*—They are struck at the mint of Port Royal,” became the fashionable phrase of literary or religious commendation. Nor was their eulogy confined to empty popular applause. It was soon observed, that the diffusion of these publications was attended with corresponding fruits. Men began every where to turn to God. Many of the blasphemous, rapacious, and voluptuous, became holy, just, and temperate. Several, whose lives had caused a public scandal, became eminent examples of devoted piety. It was remarked, that whilst the works of the Jesuits were clothed with scholastic wisdom, those of the Port Royalists seemed accompanied with divine power. The perusal of the former furnished matter for conversation; that of the latter terminated frequently in deep compunction and solid conversion.

The Port Royalists arose indeed at a time unfortunate for the Jesuits. The excellent authors their society had produced were gone. They had not been succeeded by others of equal piety and wisdom. Their places were indeed filled up by

men of learning. But that learning was unfortunately exercised at this time, chiefly in the subtilities of casuistic divinity. The main object of this society was to extend the power of the Romish see. It was founded by Ignatius de Loyola, just at the very time when Luther began his reform.^a Whilst one of these great men, beholding the deep corruptions of the church, endeavoured to shake the papal domination to its very foundation, the other, who had in the same church, first tasted the goodness of God, was laying the foundations of a society, whose chief object was to strengthen its power and extend its influence. The company founded by Ignatius had, in the space of a century, sensibly degenerated in piety. Their object was still the same; but the means they took to accomplish it were not so pure. Their learning and talents had obtained for them a high rank in public esteem, which the regularity

^a It is singular, that in the same year that Luther maintained his apostacy in the diet at Worms, and retiring himself into his monastery of Alstat, wrote a book against monastic vows, Ignatius consecrated himself to God in the church of Mountserrat; and in his retreat of Manreze, wrote the spiritual exercises which afterwards served to model his order. At the time Calvin began to gather disciples in Paris, Ignatius, who also was there to study, began to assemble his company; and lastly, at the very same time when Henry the Eighth assumed the title of Head of the Church, and commanded all his subjects, under pain of death, to raze the Pope's name from their papers and books, Ignatius de Loyola laid the foundation of a new society, in a peculiar manner devoted to the service of the holy see.—*Vide Bouhour's Life of Ignatius.*

of their lives enabled them to preserve. Their numerous seminaries for the education of youth; and their filling up the posts of confessors to all the great families, gave them a very powerful influence. This influence it was their grand aim to preserve and extend. To this end it became necessary to frame a system of morality, which should in fact, be so lax, as to give no offence to the multitude, who were resolved to continue in sin; whilst on the other hand, it skilfully maintained those appearances of sanctity, which would save their reputation with the truly pious. Such was the origin of that famous system of casuistic divinity, which was afterwards so fully exposed, and so ably refuted in Pascal's inimitable *Lettres Provinciales*. Almost all the best writers amongst the Jesuits were at this time engaged in defending the subtilties of casuistic divinity. It was perceived that their works were rather distinguished for elaborate sophistry, than for solid and valuable truths. Nay, in some of them, it was but too obvious, that the main object of the writer was to sanction immorality, and to disarm even natural conscience of its sting. The disciples of St. Austin exposed these fallacies. The society of Jesuits had been sufficiently distinguished for men both of exalted piety and profound learning. It is then to be regretted, that the whole body thought

^a The reader is referred to the edition of *Lettres Provinciales* with Wendrock's notes, especially *Lettre 5, sur la Probabilité; Lettre 6, Artifices pour eluder les Conciles; Lettre 7, sur la Methode de diriger l'Intention; Lettres sur l'Homicide, 13 et 14.*

themselves involved by the just censure of a few unworthy individuals.

Another cause likewise is mentioned as having greatly contributed to incense the Jesuits against the reputed Janesnists.

There were many persons of rank and fortune amongst M. de St. Cyran's friends. Several of them had numerous families. They consulted with M. de St. Cyran respecting their education. They wished to unite a liberal and extensive plan of instruction, with an enlightened piety, and well-grounded christian education. They were desirous to combine that public education, which would capacitate them for an enlarged sphere of patriotic usefulness; with those guarded and strict habits, which might preserve an uncontaminated innocence of mind.

A number of little schools were immediately instituted under M. de St. Cyran's inspection. A vast and luminous system of instruction was digested. Men of the first piety and learning were invited to accept the office of instructors. Nicole, Lancelot, and Fontaine, taught in these seminaries. The great Arnauld and Saci employed their pens in their service. These schools were under the direction of Port Royal. The Port Royal Greek and Latin grammars, the Greek primitives, and the Elements of logic and geometry soon made their appearance. In a short time they were not only to be found in every school in France, but they were diffused throughout all Europe.

The reputation of these schools very soon engrossed the public esteem. The seminaries of the

Jesuits had long enjoyed a deserved celebrity. On them hitherto had almost exclusively devolved the education of the higher classes. They now felt considerable mortification at seeing themselves rivalled, if not far excelled by the recent establishments of Port Royal.

With so many grounds of dislike, it is scarcely to be wondered at, that the Jesuits felt piqued ; and that they were little disposed to think well of their rivals. Even a truly pious individual would find a large portion of grace necessary to preserve christian love under such circumstances. A body of men may profess orthodox principles, but it can never be expected that the majority should be actuated by unmixed evangelical tempers. A few deeply religious individuals may be found in perhaps all professing societies ; but even as it respects them, the temptation will be found strong, where party spirit solicits, under the disguise of unfeigned love of our *own* brethren. Hence even the best men may be expected to act more consistently when they act singly, than collectively.

The Jesuits exerted every effort first to get the work of Jansenius suppressed, and afterwards to quash the little company of his disciples. The friends of M. de St. Cyran had, with his virtues, imbibed his peculiar opinions. Whilst they steadily maintained the grand doctrines of the gospel, they were also strenuous advocates for the system of grace. They published in defence of the work of Jansenius. The Jesuits as vehemently renewed the attack. At length they appealed to

Rome, hoping finally to crush a system, which has always had some of the most pious persons on its side ; and which, in this instance, had the most learned and the most spiritual body of men then extant, among its professors.

Such was the beginning of an unfortunate contest, which in its progress levelled Port Royal with the ground. Nor did those who aimed the blow, themselves escape its recoil. Port Royal indeed was annihilated ; but the tide of public opinion was turned against its cruel and relentless oppressors. They had calumniated the reputed Jansenists. But those calumnies had provoked the “ *Lettres Provinciales*,” which rendered them at once the object of ridicule and contempt to Europe. They had successfully wielded the arm of secular and ecclesiastical authority to the destruction of the Port Royalists ; but they were recompensed with that abhorrence and execration, which attends those who are supposed to have used the mask of sanctity, for the gratification of private interest and personal malice. It is more than probable that during this period, were sown those seeds which afterwards matured in the suppression of the order of Jesuits. So terminated a quarrel, which perhaps originated in an innocent difference of sentiment, on an abstruse point, which has divided the opinions of mankind in every age. A point, however, which, whilst in all ages it has divided men of the first talents in opinion, has not, in any, separated the most truly pious in mutual esteem and christian love.

This controversy soon engaged the attention of all France. Nor was an active part in it long confined to the ecclesiastics only.

It was before observed, that Cardinal Richelieu had formerly, when Bishop of Luçon, had some acquaintance with M. de St. Cyran. He respected his piety, for he had then no projects with which it could interfere. He admired his talents, for they were not called forth in competition with his own. He well knew the high estimation in which M. de St. Cyran was held in the church. He wished therefore to gain him over as a powerful engine of ecclesiastical influence. With this view, the minister sought his early friend. He courted his intimacy, and offered him benefices. M. de Cyran was aware of his views. He treated the Cardinal with that respect his situation demanded ; but he declined his overtures. The Cardinal's esteem was converted into dislike. It was increased on the publication of the catechism of Luçon. M. de Richelieu piqued himself on being yet more eminent as a theologian than as a politician. He considered it presumptuous in M. de St. Cyran to teach the necessity of the disinterested love of God, after he had published that it was superfluous. It was not long before M. de St. Cyran experienced the effects of his resentment.

The Cardinal was exceedingly anxious to annul the marriage of his enemy Gaston, Duke of Orleans, with his second wife Margaret, Princess of Lorraine. He had long had this project at heart. It was necessary to strengthen his influence by

some powerful sanction, in order to overcome the scruples which conscience suggested to Louis XIII. He applied to the court of Rome. Both the apostolic see and the foreign universities declared, to his great disappointment, the marriage to be valid. Highly incensed, but unabashed, the Cardinal remained firm to his purpose. Far from yielding the point, the undaunted minister called a general assembly of the most celebrated amongst the regular and secular clergy in France. He proposed the question. They had not courage to brave the weight of his displeasure. An unwilling assent was extorted, and the marriage was declared null by parliamentary edict (*arret de parlement*).

The vindictive temper of the minister was well known. Many of the French clergy, intimidated by his despotic power, gratuitously vindicated this iniquitous decree.

M. de St. Cyran maintained an unbroken silence ; Cardinal Richelieu was very anxious to obtain the assent of so distinguished a character. He wished the sanction of a man who was well known to possess so extensive an influence. The strict morality of M. de St. Cyran would not bend to the will of the minister. On the other hand, his prudence prevented him from uttering a rash censure, which he knew would not only be fruitless, but would serve as a pretext for his own ruin.

The Cardinal meanwhile was resolved either to extort M. de St. Cyran's assent, or to involve him in destruction. Magnificent offers were made on the part of the minister to obtain his sanction,

whilst secret emissaries were at the same time employed in proposing artful questions to him. They hoped under the pretence of religious scruples, to surprise him into a censure which would effect his ruin. Both these methods were alike ineffectual. M. de St. Cyran's silence was inviolable.

The Cardinal's enmity was thus bereft of every ostensible plea, when, most opportunely for him, the contest on Jansenism arose. The pretext he had so long assiduously sought, was now spontaneously presented. The Cardinal espoused the cause of the Jesuits. No less than fifteen new accusations appeared against M. de St. Cyran.

The Cardinal declared himself ready to exercise his authority in behalf of the church. M. de St. Cyran's friends were for a time expelled from Port Royal. He was himself seized as a heretic, and immured in the dungeon of Vincennes.

His house was beset on the evening of Ascension day, by two and twenty armed guards. They kept watch all night, with the hopes that some circumstance might transpire, to which a malignant interpretation might be affixed. For the Cardinal felt very anxious to fabricate a cause which might justify the detention of a man so highly respected. In this, however, he was foiled; a perfect stillness reigned within the house, which was the habitation of peace and prayer. They therefore entered the house, and went to the room of M. de St. Cyran. He was sitting in his study, meditating over a passage of St. Augustin, whose works lay open before him. The captain told him

he had orders that he should immediately follow him. "Sir," replied M. de St. Cyran, calmly, "it is equally my duty and my pleasure to obey the King." So saying, he stepped into the carriage, which was immediately surrounded by a company of archers. They took the road to Vincennes. As they were crossing the forest in which the fortress was situated, they met M. d'Andilly, who was going to his country-seat at Pomponne. The guards who attended M. de St. Cyran, had received orders to turn back the facings of their regimentals, so as to excite no suspicion. M. d'Andilly, astonished to see his friend so numerously attended, rode up to the side of the carriage, and cheerfully said, "Where can you be travelling with such an escort of servants?" M. de St. Cyran replied with a smile, "You should rather ask them where I am travelling to. They lead me, not I them. However, my dear friend," pursued he, seriously, "I consider myself, and trust all my dear friends will consider me, as the prisoner rather of God than of men." M. d'Andilly happened to have in his hand the confessions of St. Austin. He gave it his friend, saying, "You first taught me the worth of this book; I am glad I can restore it to you at a time when it can be of as much value to you, as the gift of it was to me." They then embraced as friends who expect to see each other's face no more, till the morn of the resurrection of the just. M. de St. Cyran pursued his journey. His imprisonment took place on the 14th of May, 1638.

In this instance Cardinal Richelieu eminently justified the character he gave of himself. Speaking to the Marquis de la Vieuville, he once said, “ *Je n’ose rien entreprendre sans y avoir bien pensé, mais quand une fois j’ai pris ma résolution, je vais à mon but, je renverse tout, je fauche tout, et ensuite je couvre tout de ma soutane rouge.*”

M. de St. Cyran suffered much at Vincennes. His books, papers, pens, and ink, were for a considerable time withheld from him. He was not only deprived of seeing his friends, but, by the avarice of his jailor, was frequently destitute of an adequate supply of food. The dungeon in which he was immured was damp, and exposed to all the inclemencies of the seasons. Nor had he to contend alone with outward sufferings. He had not only to encounter foes without, but likewise fightings within. Whilst worldly men only suffer from the deprivation of worldly comforts ; the true servant of God is chiefly cast down by a fear lest he should in any degree betray his master’s cause, by not walking worthy of his vocation.

The first thing M. de St. Cyran did on entering his dungeon, was to throw himself on his knees, and to beseech his LORD to give him the grace to profit by it. He implored him to accept both his soul and body as a living sacrifice, wholly devoted to his service ; and he intreated him so to direct his heart, that he might, from his inmost soul, have no other will than his.

Nevertheless, the LORD saw fit, at first, to try his highly favored servant, by withdrawing from

him all sensible perception of spiritual comfort. He might truly be said to accompany his divine master in the garden. His soul was troubled and sore amazed. All joyful sense of the divine presence left him : grievous temptations assailed him on all sides, and the subtle enemy of his soul, the accuser of the brethren, was permitted continually to harass his heart by accusations, best suited to the tenderness of his conscience.

God knows the souls that are his. And when he sees fit to try them, he can suit those trials to probe the very inmost heart, and to try the very ground of the soul, in a manner which no other can. All that man can inflict upon us is merely external, and is therefore comparatively light. But when the Father of Spirits searches the heart, as with candles, when the messenger of the covenant comes as a refiner's fire, who shall stand the day of his appearing, or who shall not shrink under that word which is as a two-edged sword. Then indeed it is felt to be a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, and to divide between the joints and marrow, anatomizing the very soul and spirit.

During the first fortnight of his imprisonment, the LORD permitted his faithful servant to be deeply exercised, that the trial of his faith, more precious than that of gold, though it was tried with fire, might be found to the praise, and honour, and glory of God, at the appearing of JESUS CHRIST. A deep sense of his own utter unworthiness humbled him to the dust ; and the awful

judgments of God seemed impending over him. He was indeed traversing the valley of the shadow of death. Even the Scriptures failed to give him comfort. Every passage which was presented to his mind, seemed not applied by the Spirit of God, but wrested by the powers of darkness to his farther perplexity. All the curses of God appeared levelled against him ; nor was he enabled to rely with joyous faith on any promise. It appeared that he who was to lead so many souls to God, was appointed to undergo the same trials as Peter, the rock on which the Jewish and Gentile churches were built ; and Satan was permitted to sift both these eminent servants of the LORD as wheat. It was indeed the hour of the powers of darkness.

Still, however, though deeply tried, his faith failed not. He could appeal to the LORD that he had kept his integrity ; he could say, Thou knowest, LORD, the way that I would take, and after I am tried I shall come forth like gold. He endeavoured to follow the exhortation of the prophet, who commands those who obey the voice of the LORD, and walk in darkness and have no light, to trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon their God. He therefore steadily walked in his precepts, waiting for his re-appearance. This state of desolation did not continue long. His faith having been tried, the LORD again appeared from heaven, and his Spirit again returned into his heart as the comforter. He had been spending some time in prayer, when these words, from the 119th Psalm, were powerfully applied to his

heart, “Princes have persecuted me without a cause, but my heart stood in awe of thy word only.” The whole of the 9th Psalm too was immediately after presented to him with a degree of light and unction which he had never experienced. He was instantly enabled to feel joy and peace in believing, to suffer long, seeking not his own, and not being provoked, to bear all things, to hope all things, and to endure all things. And trying the spirit by its fruits, he knew it to be of God. From that hour, M. de St. Cyran experienced uninterrupted peace. The joy in his LORD was his strength, and during the whole of his imprisonment he was uniformly enabled to rejoice evermore, to pray without ceasing, and in every thing to give thanks.

As soon as his books were restored, he resumed his studies. His hours were divided between prayer, study, and acts of charity. Some of his most valuable works were composed whilst in the fortress of Vincennes. To his charity, also, many amongst his guards and fellow-prisoners were indebted, not only for a supply of temporal necessities, but, under God, for the salvation of their souls. The governor of the fortress himself became soon a converted character. Those committed to his charge soon felt the good fruits of his piety.

M. de St. Cyran’s charity was fervent and genuine. It not only consulted the necessities, but the feelings of others. It was the custom at Vincennes, that all the prisoners should attend

mass once a day. He observed that several of them, amongst whom were two or three persons of distinction, were very thinly clad. M. de St. Cyran immediately packed up some of his books, and sent them with a letter to a lady of his acquaintance in Paris, requesting her to sell the books, and with the money to buy a supply of clothing for the prisoners ; “ I will also thank you, madam,” continued he, “ to buy some clothes for the Baron and Baroness de Beausoleil. Pray let the cloth be fine and good, such as suits their rank. I do not know what is proper, but I think I have somewhere heard, that gentlemen and ladies of their condition cannot appear without gold lace for the men, and black lace for the women. If so, pray get the best, and, in short, let all be done modestly, but yet sufficiently handsomely, that in looking at each other, they may, for a few minutes at least, forget that they are captives.” To this letter the lady returned a remonstrance, observing that this money economized might be better employed, and more suitably to his ecclesiastical character. To this he answered, “ I do not believe that the LORD who commands me to give Cæsar that which is Cæsar’s, will account me a bad steward for giving modestly to each according to that rank in which *he* placed them. The deepest rivers cause the least noise ; and the most enlightened piety is generally the least singular. The christian rule is, to do as we would be done by ; and if you ask me how we should act towards ourselves in ex-

pences which custom alone has rendered necessary, I shall answer, *Never lavish upon your rank what it only allows ; and never refuse to it what it indispensably exacts.* The violator of the first rule is a bad steward, the violator of the second wants that christian humility which makes the true child of God submit for his sake, to the powers and ordinances that be. Now the rule which decides what we should allow ourselves, regulates also what we should give others : for we are to love our neighbour as ourselves ; and, therefore, the degree in which we are to consult our own rank, is that also in which we are to regard his." The lady immediately bought the things. They were conveyed into the prisoners' apartments, who never suspected whence they came. They only observed that M. de St. Cyran himself was destitute of those comforts, and concluded that his having been alone forgotten, was a judgment upon him for his heresy.

The beneficial influence, however, of M. de St. Cyran was not bounded by the narrow limits of his prison walls. From the gloom of his dungeon a light arose, whose beams extended to the remotest parts of France.

Schools were constantly established on the plan he had traced. He could, indeed, no longer personally inspect them ; yet, through the medium of correspondence, they were still carried on under his auspices.

A constant epistolary communication on religious subjects was also maintained between him

and his friends. The unreserved devotion and enlightened piety that breathed in every line of his letters, added to their love and veneration. The profound learning which furnished his ideas ; the luminous perspicuity with which they were arranged ; and the animated eloquence with which they were expressed, filled them with admiration. Of his exhortations it might be truly said, in the language of Solomon, that they were as apples of gold, made visible through a network of silver.

M. de St. Cyran's letters were handed about amongst his disciples as sacred treasures. Every line of his writing they honoured with the sanctity of a relic ; whilst it also united with it the charm and zest of novelty. They viewed each with a tender reverence, considering it as perhaps the last gift of a friend who will be seen no more. Each letter, at the same time, possessed the advantage of being adapted to the exigency of the moment, and of being the advice of a friend, who, though not visible, was yet at hand. The number of M. de St. Cyran's disciples increased, whilst at Vincennes, with accelerated progression. Some of them were afterwards eminent as the champions of Jansenism. Of this number was the great Arnauld. Few, however, comparatively speaking, engaged in controversy. Most of them purposely avoided any conversation on the contested points.

All meanwhile were distinguished for righteousness of life, and sanctity of manners. Their

devotion was eminent, their patience under persecution invincible. The charity of some amongst them so profuse, as to heal whole provinces of the wounds and desolations of a bloody civil war. As a body they eminently shone forth as bright and burning lights, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation.

Nor were these things doubtful, nor could their genuine fruits of piety be called in question by their very enemies. These good works were not wrought in a corner. His disciples were not confined to the seclusion of Port Royal. This monastery was, indeed, in constant correspondence with M. de St. Cyran. It was also through the medium of Port Royal, that his influence was chiefly diffused. Still, though beginning at that abbey, it extended itself throughout all France.

Persons of the first rank, and filling the highest political situations, persons not only at the foot of the throne, but on the throne itself, gloried in following him, even as he followed CHRIST.

The imprisonment of M. de St. Cyran, had long occasioned great indignation amongst well disposed persons.

John de Wert, the General of the Spanish army, happened to be a prisoner of war on parole, during the detention of M. de St. Cyran. Whilst he staid at Paris, the Cardinal de Richelieu gave a superb ballet, to which he invited this Spanish nobleman ; and every expense was lavished upon the decorations, which could contribute to give the foreigner a high idea of French magnificence.

The Cardinal retained his noble guest next to him, during the whole of the performance, which he beheld in perfect silence ; at which M. de Richelieu not a little chagrined, asked him, “ What he considered as the most marvellous spectacle he had ever seen ? ” John de Wert immediately replied, “ That of all the wonders he had ever seen, none had so much astonished him, as to see, in the dominions of *his very Christian Majesty*, bishops amusing themselves at theatres, whilst saints languished in prisons. ”

M. de St. Cyran endured five years’ imprisonment. At length, Cardinal Richelieu expired. On the 4th of December, 1642, this minister, from the plenitude of despotic power on earth, was cited to appear before his final judge in Heaven. He died aged fifty-eight. The friends of M. de Hauranne observed, that the day on which he departed, was that of the festival of St. Cyran.

This event was soon succeeded by M. de St. Cyran’s release. He never recovered his health. He had often deprived himself of both fire and clothing to relieve his fellow prisoners. His constitution was broken by the hardships he had undergone. He survived his enlargement only a few months.

M. de St. Cyran quitted Vincennes on Friday, the 6th of February, 1643, during the week of the Purification. This M. de St. Cyran often mentioned with pleasure. He was willing to consider it as a sign that he had been heard in the prayer which he continually offered up,

that he might not be released from prison till this affliction had wrought its perfect work in the purification of his soul. His friend M. d'Andilly, came in his carriage to take him from Vincennes. No captive had ever received such demonstrations of esteem. His guards and fellow-prisoners threw themselves at his feet, to implore his parting benediction, and they mingled tears of joy at his release, with those of sorrow for his departure. His guards especially mourned his loss; and all the garrison wishing to shew their respect, spontaneously arranged themselves in two rows to let him walk out, to the sound of fifes and drums, and discharges of musketry. It was afterwards found, that several of the prisoners, won by his piety, had taken notes of many of his actions and sayings, from which they had derived peculiar edification. On this occasion, M. Lancelot makes the following observations: "We often wished that M. de St. Cyran could have had a person continually with him to note down all his actions, and to portray all his holy discourses, his eminent virtues, and even the eloquence of his silence, which has so often spoken to our hearts. God, however, no doubt for wise purposes, has not permitted it." Perhaps indeed, it might not be so easily done. The most eminent graces, like the deepest rivers, generally pursue a silent course. They possess, in degree, the peace and immutability of their divine author. It is immediately felt in its effects, though it cannot be described in its source. It is that powerful and constant

effusion of the Spirit of God, which transforms the heart of the new man, and continually abides therein ; which does not dazzle by brilliant and remarkable actions, so much as it imparts a living unction and a godlike dignity to the most common ones. It produces throughout the whole soul, mind, and heart, a certain simplicity, profound peace, gentle love, and immutable calmness, that charms and elevates the heart of the observer, though he scarcely knows why. He is filled with awful reverence in contemplating the whole, whilst he is yet unable to discover any thing extraordinary in each part. As to its effects, the perfection of saints on earth is, perhaps, more perceptible in what they do not, than in what they actually do.

So far as it may be said of man in his fallen state, it consists in a perfect silence of all human passions, and in a total extinction of every movement of earthly pleasures and desires. The silence of the man of God differs from the tumult of the world, as the still expanse of the ocean differs from, and yet exceeds in sublimity, a roaring summer torrent, which lays waste all in its way, and disappears for ever. It consists in that spotless holiness which is best comprehended when we contrast with it our own disorder and impurity. It is a participation on earth of the happiness of the blessed in heaven. It is the beginning of that ineffable union with God, which, though begun on earth, can only be consummated in heaven. Happy, indeed, are those to whom it has pleased

the Lord to exhibit such models of virtue. “Yea, rather more blessed are those, that hearing, keep their sayings!”

A few months after his release, M. de St. Cyran was seized with apoplexy. He was at the same time reduced by the effects of a surgical operation. Owing to the unskilfulness of some of his attendants, his sufferings were extreme. Yet no unkind reflection escaped his lips. “What the LORD has permitted, we must receive with the same submission,” observed he, “as what he has appointed; blessed be the name of the LORD.” In the intervals, between the lethargy and high delirium, from which he alternately suffered, he spoke much to the edification and comfort of the few friends whom the sudden nature of his illness had permitted to be sent for. After a few hours’ illness, he expired in perfect peace, in the arms of his assistant and friend, M. Singlin. He died on the 11th of October, 1643. He was aged sixty-two.^a

^a His disciples thus portray his character. It appears coloured by the warmth of christian love, and yet painted with the most exact christian truth. It is inserted, notwithstanding its length, on account of the useful instruction it conveys. “M. de St. Cyran was a saint indeed. It had pleased God to bestow upon him a rich assemblage of those qualities which are generally met with separately. Though called to the sacred functions of the priesthood by men, he was yet sanctified for it by a large measure of the Holy Spirit of God; and he appeared truly fitted to the rank of those chosen servants, whom the LORD himself has called out to be as lights to the world. Of him it might eminently be said, that he offered no false fire upon the altar. His light, indeed, shone before men with a clear and steady brightness, illuminating and diffusing a vital heat in the church of God. But

By his followers, M. de St. Cyran was revered as a saint. Numbers of persons crowded to see his corpse, and to preserve some of his

the flame was kindled from heaven, and its brilliancy arose from the fervour of his love, even more than from the superiority of his understanding. ‘ Unde ardet unde lucet.’ He drew every sentiment and every principle, from the inexhaustible and rich mine of Scripture. Nor did he merely hear much, and read much of Scripture, but, above all, he prayed much, and meditated much over it. Diligently comparing Scripture with Scripture, his mind became enlightened with divine truth; and meditating and praying over every part, his heart became kindled with divine love. He studied each passage till he clearly understood its sense; he dwelt upon each till he was thoroughly penetrated by its force; he thought that he but half knew what he only knew with his understanding; and he therefore studied as every christian ought to do, that is, both with the head and with the heart; letting light and heat increase with an equal progression, and mutually assist each other. Christianity is, in an eminent manner, the science of the heart; and he who does not receive it into his heart, studies it to very little purpose. And, whereas, in all other studies, informing the understanding is the principal; in christianity it only forms the subordinate part. Nor is the science of the head of any other use, but as it enables men to distinguish the workings of their own imaginations, from the genuine operation of the Spirit of God. Hence he not only studied, but sought to nourish his soul with Scripture; knowing that it is said of CHRIST’s words, that they are spirit and they are the life; and that till they are experienced to be so, the soul remains dead in trespasses and sins. Nor did he rest in the letter of Scripture. He knew that the reason why they are to be searched, is, because they are they which testify of CHRIST; and he knew that the Spirit of God can alone take of the things of CHRIST, and shew them unto us; for no man can, in truth, call CHRIST, LORD, but by the Holy Spirit. Hence, from reading *of* CHRIST, he went *to* CHRIST; and, from being *with* CHRIST, he went forth amongst men *for* CHRIST. He knew one thing was needful, even to know

relics. The peace of God, says Lancelot, was sensibly felt in the chamber of death, and the majesty of glorified immortality seemed to rest in

the only true God and JESUS CHRIST whom he hath sent. He therefore sought him in faith, and with his whole heart, and seeking him, found him. He knew that it was by looking to him only, that the ends of the earth can be saved; he therefore looked at him continually, who was the author, and whom he knew must be the finisher, of his faith; and he considered him continually, who set us an example that we should tread in his steps. Thus he sought wisdom, and God gave it him. He sought it at first with prayers and tears, and renewed supplication, when he sought it to save his soul; and when he had found peace with God, he pursued it with equal earnestness, though with renewed confidence, that he might, by a farther increase, abundantly glorify that God whose mercies he had experienced. He was far from the awful delusion of those selfish professors, who seek the salvation of their own souls independently of a disinterested love of God. Hence he did not rest in a half conversion. The love of God was truly shed abroad in his heart; CHRIST really dwelt in his heart by faith; and if he enlightened the church, it was chiefly owing to the singleness of his eye that his mind was so full of light. One thing he had desired of the LORD, that he might dwell in the house of the LORD for ever, and his divine master gave to him three things; he blessed him with abundant faith, and abundant hope, but, above all, with superabundant love. He waited on thee, O Lord, in the sanctuary of his heart, and thou taughtest him unutterable things. He communed with thee in secret, and thy power went forth with him, and thy glory visibly rested upon him. His sound went forth throughout the land, so that the deaf heard; and thy life manifested in his life, has, in many instances awaked the dead in trespasses and sins; and the voice of thy Spirit speaking through him, has bid them live to life eternal. His fruits declared the root whence they sprung. But the multitude of those he was instrumental in converting, were his chief glory. A few, indeed, of these have been known by writings, whose fame will long endure as public bene-

awful solemnity on the mortal remains. The course was so great, that it became necessary to lock up his room till the interment. The funeral

factors, not only to their own age, but to the world : many more, unheard of by men, walk before God, content in spreading a sweet odour in the humble walks of private life. Thus has God blessed this eminently favoured servant with the privacy he sought ; till, at the great and awful day, when every secret of the heart shall be unveiled, they shall start from the long slumber of the tomb, and decorate with jewels the rich crown which the righteous Judge shall then give him.

This man of God entertained an exalted view of the greatness and holiness of the christian profession. How unspeakably high, would he say, must be that holiness, of which God himself made man, set us the example. How diligent should be our exertions, when the light of God is given to point our way ; the strength of God to hold our feet in life. How exalted should be the standard of those men, who expect the God of purity and holiness itself to judge them. And how confident and sure a trust should they maintain, when God himself, their judge, has suffered, to purchase their immortal felicity, and to find place for exercising mercy consistently with justice. Surely if the love of compassion drew down God himself from heaven to earth ; gratitude, for so unspeakable a mercy, should lead men from earthly desires, to dwell in heaven in their spirits. As the apostle Paul was, whilst he dwelt on earth, present with CHRIST in spirit, though absent in body, so M. de St. Cyran was perpetually anxious that his disciples should not merely be professing christians, but that their conversation should really be in heaven, and that their whole heart and mind should be thoroughly cast in the gospel mould. He dreaded the curse of Ezekiel against those false prophets who build with untempered mortar, and thus raise a wall without strength, which falls at the first storm.

As M. de St. Cyran received the Scriptures from his heart, so he accepted them as they are, without any foreign mixture or comment of his own. Before he began to build, he had counted the cost ; and when he weighed the price, it was in the balance

was attended by an unusually numerous assemblage of the most distinguished and eminent personages. Almost every dignitary of the church

of the sanctuary. Hence he never sought an easy road to heaven ; for he knew that there is no such thing. He recommended to others the road that he himself walked in, viz. the straight road mentioned in Scripture as the highway of the kingdom. He knew that CHRIST set us an example, that we should tread in his steps, and he therefore looked to CHRIST, and to none else. He knew that CHRIST pleased not himself, nor did he expect that the servant could find an easier path than his master. He had no new light, whereby to accommodate the world with CHRIST ; he had no new and ingenious contrivances to save men, without obliging them to take up their cross, their *daily* cross, *inward* as well as outward, and to follow their Saviour in the same narrow road which he had trodden. He had discovered no new mode of widening the narrow way ; of lightening the daily cross ; or of reconciling together God and Mammon. In this modern science he was profoundly ignorant. His systems were not traced on the mutable sand of human opinion ; but they were engraven on the immutable rock of God's word. He conducted souls to God only by that royal highway of repentance evidenced by mortification, and faith evidenced by obedience, which all the patriarchs, saints, prophets, and martyrs, had trodden before. Nor did he ever step aside where he saw the print of their footsteps, though it were a path rough with thorns, or even dyed in blood. Whilst most professors were labouring to mitigate the rule of CHRIST, he was solely taken up in seeking that powerful help of the Holy Spirit, which renews the strength of the fainting soul, like the eagle's ; and enduing her with power from on high, shall, in truth, make the most rigid practice easy. Whilst others strove to accommodate the road to their strength, he, relying on God, sought from him strength, adequate to the difficulties of the way.

Whilst M. de St. Cyran avoided the errors of softening down christianity to the low standard of general practice, he equally avoided the subtle refinements of a false and mystic imagination, which, soaring on wings of her own creating, rises into regions of

then in Paris was there. Nobles, men of letters, and even princes of the blood, were present. Amongst the vast concourse of his disciples at the

speculation and fancy, widely different from those which the word of God marks out. He formed no system of ideal perfection, aiming at being wise above what was written. But he rather aimed with superior fidelity, to transcribe into the heart the exact representation which the word of God had drawn. He neither softened the practice of christianity to suit modern effeminacy of life; nor refined her system to coincide with the modern flights of philosophy and imagination. His foundation of faith was CHRIST; his foundation of practice, the prophets and apostles. His heart was curbed with rigid self-denial, as he steadily walked on towards the mark of christian, not angelic perfection. Deeply sensible of the fallen state of the human heart, and of the continual need of cleansing anew in the fountain opened for sin; his heart, his life, his words, were clothed with humility; and hence he perpetually grew in the double love both of the LORD who had bought him, and of his fellow men, for whom the like precious price had been paid.

M. de St. Cyran's mode of conducting souls was solid and substantial. He aimed as much to cure them of a merely superficial devotion, as of sin. He was aware of the thorough corruption of body, soul, and spirit; and he endeavoured to subdue each by its own weapons.

The body he conquered by a strict, but not a rigorous discipline; the soul he convinced by grounding it in the truth; the spirit he well knew could only be renewed by faith.

He knew that religion consists in a change which God alone can work in the heart; but he knew also, that where such a change is really wrought, it will assuredly be visible in the life. Hence he expected conviction to bear its proper fruit of confession, repentance, and mortification, just as much as faith that of good works. Hence his converts were generally solid. They were like trees bearing their fruits in due season; trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD. Hence their piety bore the traces of a long and exercised humility, their fortitude of a firm faith, their

ceremony, were particularly observed his faithful friend Lancelot, Madame de Rohan, princesse de Guimenée, and Louisa of Gonzague, the intimate

self-denial of an heart-felt renunciation of the world, their good works of a genuine love of God. Their religion was substantial; a piety not of phrase and gesture, but of heart and life. Hence his converts shew forth that it was in the school of CHRIST, and not of men that they had been taught. When, during the tempestuous reign of Louis XIV, sweeping hurricanes and lowering tempests burst upon the Gallican church, and threatened the professing world with swift destruction; they generally stood as towers, immutable amidst the wide desolation, being at once marks for the vengeance of the adversary, and yet proving firm fortresses of refuge, for the shelter of weak, but sincere brethren.

M. de Cyran patiently bore the reign of the proud. During a season of violence and injustice, he preserved heartfelt peace and humility. He prayed for his enemies; and his prayer was unfeigned, because his heart, deeply christianised, in truth felt the lightness of the evils they could inflict on him, and the unutterable abyss of woe into which they were plunging themselves. Therefore his heart truly compassionated their deplorable case. The captive, from the depth of his dungeon, shed tears which God alone witnessed, over the awful case of his thoughtless oppressor; and his prayer for the man who loaded him with chains, parted from a pure heart, and unfeigned lips. When the disciples were commanded to forgive until seventy times seven, they said not, increase our love; but increase our faith; and our blessed Lord approves their request, by telling them that faith can remove mountains; for it is by faith we realize the lightness of temporal woes, and the weight of those eternal ones to which the wicked are hastening.

Such was M. de Cyran, a man originally of like passions with us; but who, by contemplating the ineffable glories of God in JESUS CHRIST, was gradually transformed into his image of righteousness and true holiness. In a dark age, he was a light to the church, for God gave him his light. In an age teeming with error, he upheld the truth, because he was himself upheld

friend of the Reverend Mère Angélique, and afterwards Queen of Poland.

His body was interred in Paris, at the parochial church of St. Jacques du Haut pas. His entrails were deposited at Port Royal des Champs. An appropriate epitaph was placed over each. At the final destruction of Port Royal des Champs, the urn containing his ashes was removed to St. Jacques.^b His heart he had some years before bequeathed to his intimate friend, M. Arnauld d'Andilly.

by God's truth. In a faithless age, he stood firm in the faith, because he leaned on God's faithfulness. In an age of relaxation, he was holy, because God vouchsafed to make him partaker of his holiness. In an age when the church was rent by division, his soul beamed with love, because the flame of God's love glowed in his heart.

When I look at the reverend father of so many holy spiritual children, whose shoe-latchets I am unworthy to loose, I could cast myself at his feet in the dust; but when I contemplate the great and merciful LORD, who alone wrought all these wonders for his servant; I must say, "to him, and to him alone, be all the honour and glory, now and for ever."

The Psalmist, after contemplating the beauties of the natural creation, exclaims, "O LORD, how manifold are thy works, in wisdom hast thou made them all!" Yet surely to a Christian eye the creation reflects as a shadow the glory of God; the heart of his saints alone presents a lively image of it. For whilst the one only shews forth his boundless power and his unsearchable wisdom; it belongs to the other, not only to display these attributes in a yet more perfect manner; but above all to give some faint image of the unutterable sanctity of his holiness, and riches of his love."

^b His tombstone yet remains there, where I saw it in September, 1814.

M. de St. Cyran's private life proves him to have been a most eminently pious man. The extensive effects which he produced on his age, prove him to have been a truly great one. It is however by those effects that this greatness is chiefly perceptible to posterity. The talents in which he supereminently excelled, were those rather calculated to obtain a powerful influence over his contemporaries, than to secure a brilliant posthumous fame.

His distinguishing talents were spiritual direction and conversation. In these he eminently excelled. But the peculiar characteristic of M. de St. Cyran was, a firmness and strength of character, by which he not merely attracted the hearts, but gained a most powerful ascendancy over the minds of all with whom he conversed.

It has already been sufficiently observed that M. de St. Cyran was a man of extensive theological learning, and of profound research in ecclesiastical antiquity. As a writer, he held a very respectable rank. With such exalted piety and deep erudition, he could scarcely do otherwise. Nevertheless, he possibly owes his literary reputation, chiefly to the unbounded affection and veneration of his disciples.

Perhaps M. de St. Cyran's works might have ranked more highly, had they not been so completely eclipsed by those of his followers. Most readers recollect, that the *Lettres Provinciales* became the standard of the French language. Their expectations of M. de St. Cyran's works

are formed from the writings of Pascal, Nicole, Arnauld, Racine, Saci, Tillemont, le Nain, St. Beuve, Lancelot, d'Andilly, Hermant, St. Marthe, Du Fossé, Fontaine, Quesnel, St. Amour, &c. Accustomed to the splendour of these great lights of the Port Royal school, and habituated to the classic elegance with which their erudition and piety is clothed; the world naturally, though perhaps unreasonably, expects to meet these excellencies united in a transcendent degree, in the writings of the man who formed such disciples.

Only one or two of M. de St. Cyran's works are yet generally read. Those most likely to profit persons who seek rather to grow in piety, than to enter into the controversies of the times, are as follows, "Lettres Spirituelles," reprinted at Lyons, 1679, in 3 vols. 12mo. Another volume, containing little tracts, has since been added. They are chiefly brief explanations of christian doctrine, and thoughts on christian poverty.

A pseudonymous publication in folio, under the name of *Petrus Aurelius*, has been generally attributed to M. de St. Cyran. Others have considered it as a joint production of himself and his nephew, M. de Barcos. This work obtained in its day a high reputation, and a very extensive celebrity.

The clergy of France published an edition, at their own expense, in 1642.

In the eye of the world, the greatest glory of M. de St. Cyran is doubtless this: he was the founder of the wide celebrity of Port Royal, and he had both the Arnaulds, the le Maitres, Nicole,

and Pascal, for his disciples. His greatest glory in the sight of christians is, that he was the blessed instrument of gaining such an innumerable company (whose names are, with his own, inscribed in heaven,) to that experimental knowledge of the only true God, and of JESUS CHRIST our LORD, which is life eternal.

CORNELIUS JANSENIUS, Bishop of Ypres, was a native of the village of Acquoy, near Leerdam, a small town in Holland. He was born on the 28th of October, 1585 ; his father's name was John Otto. Both his parents were zealous catholics. He first studied at Utretcht, and afterwards at the university of Louvain. He soon became the first student. It was at Louvain he first received the appellation of Jansen, or the son of John. It was afterwards latinized, according to the custom then prevalent amongst authors. He has been ever since known by the name of Jansenius.

His constitution, naturally weak, suffered by unremitting study. The physicians recommended a tour through France. Jansenius went to Paris in 1604. There he formed a close intimacy with M. du Vergier de Hauranne, afterwards the celebrated Abbé de St. Cyran.

Both had studied at Louvain. Abelli and Leydecker describe them as contemporaries there ; and Dupin represents them as studying theology together, under Fromond. Dom Lancelot asserts

the contrary. He says that Jansenius, who was four years younger than M. du Vergier, immediately succeeded him at the University, and states their personal acquaintance as having commenced at Paris. However this may be, they soon became closely united. They studied together Greek, Hebrew, and Philosophy ; nor was it long before they acquired a high reputation for their theological learning.

Jansenius still continued in ill health. His friend proposed to him to quit Paris, and to become an inmate of his house at Bayonne. There they remained together six years. M. de Hauranne was chosen canon of the cathedral, and Jansenius was appointed head master of the college, newly established in that city. Their leisure hours were dedicated to the study of the Fathers. On the works of St. Austin, they bestowed an especial degree of labor and attention. In the pages of this great luminary of the church, they soon either saw, or else fancied they saw, those doctrines of inadmissible grace, which were the ground-work of their subsequent system. They imagined themselves arranging into one harmonious and well combined fabric, sentiments scattered throughout the pages of the venerable bishop of Hippo ; whilst they were, in fact, organizing that system, afterwards so distinguished by the name of Jansenism. A system which, when published, was denounced to the church as heretical. Nor did it only stigmatize the name of Jansenius, with the odious appellation

of Heresiarch ; but it likewise subjected his friends to a long series of cruel persecutions.

The studies of M. de St. Cyran and his friend, were indefatigable. Madame de Hauranne, who kept her son's house, often interposed. " I am really afraid, my dear son," she continually said, " you will kill your good Fleming with so much hard study."

At the expiration of six years, they returned to Paris. They continued together a short time. Jansenius afterwards, in 1617, returned to Louvain. Two years afterwards he obtained a doctor's diploma. He was invested, also, with the direction of the college of St. Pulcheria^c. It was completed under his inspection, and the regulations were instituted by him. In the course of the years 1624 and 1625, he was twice deputed by the university to the Spanish court. The object of this deputation was to oppose the Jesuits. They had attempted to establish professorships of their own at Louvain, which should have a power of conferring degrees, valid in the university. The college of Louvain succeeded in repressing their encroachments. The Jesuits never forgave Jansenius.

^c This college is now appropriated to a school, which is regulated in a manner which does equal honor to the piety and information of its conductor, Madame Parideans. In the midst of the large gardens of this excellent Institution, which overlook the gardens of various monasteries, and whose views terminate at the wooded walks on the ramparts of Louvain, is a sort of summer-house, called the tower of Jansenius, where he is said to have composed most of his works. It is now, 1815, used as a gardener's tool and seed house.

About this period, the reputation of Jansenius began to be diffused throughout Europe. He published several theological works. They were laborious, and discovered an uncommon depth both of piety and learning. They were consequently highly esteemed.

One indeed of the works of Jansenius, entitled “Mars Gallicus,” gave a mortal offence to Cardinal Richelieu. At the King of Spain’s request, he had drawn a parallel between the state of the church in France and in Spain. The result was decidedly in favour of the latter. This work appeared at the most unfortunate moment. It was just then suspected, that Cardinal Richelieu wished to erect France into a patriarchat, and to become himself patriarch. Perhaps at no other juncture could it have been so unwelcome.

Some have thought it was principally this circumstance, which laid the foundation of that unrelenting animosity with which Cardinal Richelieu afterwards persecuted the Jansenists.

The reputation of Jansenius increased rapidly. His learning had also obtained him the chancellorship of the university of Louvain. Bishoprics were often designed for him, but the influence of the Jesuits always prevented their being bestowed. At length his uncommon merit prevailed. His piety, notwithstanding all their cabals, gained him the bishopric of Ypres. He was consecrated on the 28th of October, 1636.

Scarcely was Jansenius seated in the episcopal chair, when the influence of his superior merits

was felt. His piety, his humanity, his assiduity, his self-denial, and his learning, were topics of universal observation. His erudition, indeed, had long obtained celebrity, but men forgot to notice his christian virtues, till he was placed in a situation, where themselves became partakers in their beneficial influence.

The day he devoted to acts of charity, religious instruction, and visitations of his diocese. The night he dedicated, as he was used, to prayer and study. Even whilst at Bayonne, he seldom went to bed. A large old-fashioned chair, fitted up with cushions and a writing-desk, was long exhibited at M. de St. Cyran's, as the study of Jansenius. In this chair he was accustomed to read, to write, and to sleep. He usually passed the night in it. When overtaken by fatigue, he leaned back, dozed for a short time, and then resumed his studies.

He scarcely ever slept more than four hours out of the twenty-four.

Jansenius was a man of remarkably abstemious and ascetic habits. Grace had entirely subdued his naturally warm temper, and had converted the impetuosity of a lion, into the patience and gentleness of a lamb. He was a man of primitive integrity, fervent faith, and a solid understanding. His learning was not unworthy of comparison with that of the doctors of the christian church ; and his piety was worthy of a true successor of the apostles. Yet the quality for which he was peculiarly distinguished, was christian watchfulness

and circumspection. His piety attained to its uncommon growth and depth, not so much from any superior brightness of divine illumination, as by his peculiar assiduity, in strictly attending to that light he had.

Whilst at Bayonne, both himself and M. de St. Cyran, had been peculiarly struck with the character of Abraham. This great patriarch had neither the advantages of the Christian, nor even of the Mosaic institution. The command he received from the LORD was, "Walk before me, and be thou perfect." Abraham obeyed the command, and became the father of the faithful, and the friend of God. Owing to a contemplation of this passage, both M. de St. Cyran and Jansenius were peculiarly attentive, at all times, to entertain a sense of the divine presence, and to walk as before God. The immense plenitude of spiritual riches, which afterwards distinguished these great men, was almost entirely accumulated by a constant watchfulness over their own spirits, and self-denial in what are termed little things.

The charities of Jansenius were extensive, but discriminating. His measure and mode of assisting his flock, united an episcopal munificence with christian humility, simplicity, and love. He never seemed fatigued with serving the poor.


Jansenius was no sooner elevated to the see of Ypres, than he occupied himself in tracing a plan, for effecting a permanent reformation in his dio-

cese. His scheme was said to have been as luminous, as his end was pious and benevolent.

His beneficial projects were never executed. A raging plague broke out in Flanders. It more particularly desolated the neighbourhood of Ypres. The inhabitants, seized with consternation, fled in every direction. Motives, neither of humanity or lucre, could induce them to assist those afflicted with the distemper.

In the midst of this fiery trial, the faith of Jansenius was clearly manifested. It stood unmoved, because it was founded upon CHRIST, the Rock. Calm amidst the dismayed multitude, he was seen in every place where the devouring contagion had spread. Every where he appeared, as a guardian angel amidst the sick and dying.

Their most loathsome wounds he dressed with his own hands. The most infected abodes of wretchedness he entered in person, bringing food and medicines, when all others refused the task. Wretches, abandoned by all, plundered and stripped of every thing, lying in the agonies of death, found in the bishop of Ypres, the most tender friend and compassionate benefactor. He was ever ready to pour divine truth into the heart, and to attempt to save the soul, even whilst the body lay in the very jaws of death. Wherever the infection raged, there was the good bishop to be seen. If for a short time he was missed, it was well known that he retired, not for the purpose of relaxation, but of intercession and of prayer.



The LORD, who remembers even a cup of cold water bestowed in his name, beheld the labours of his faithful servant. His loving kindness honored with a martyr's crown, him who had performed a martyr's work.

Jansenius was suddenly struck with the contagion. The LORD whom he served, saw he was prepared. He does not causelessly grieve the children of men, nor willingly afflict with needless sufferings. A few hours sufficed this highly favoured servant to leave a glorious testimony behind. Then the LORD was pleased immediately to remove him from persecutions on earth, to an incorruptible and undefiled inheritance among his saints in heaven. He died on the 6th of May, 1638. He was buried in the cathedral church of Ypres. His tomb was placed in the centre of the choir. A monument was erected over his remains, on which was inscribed an epitaph, which, on account of its singular beauty, is here inserted.

D. O. M.

CORNELIUS JANSENIUS HIC SITUS EST.

Satis dixi

Virtus eruditio fama cætera loquentur

Lovanii diu admirationi fuit

Hic^a incepit tantum

Ad episcopale fastigium evectus

ut Belgio ostenderetur

Ut fulgur luxit et statim Extinctus est

Sic humana omnia

etiam brevia cum longa sunt !

^a Ypres

Funera tamen suo superstes
Vivet in Augustino
 Arcanarum cogitationum ejus
 Si quis unquam fidelissimus interpres
 Ingenium divinum studium acre vitam totam
 huic operi arduo et pio dederat
 et eum eo finitus est
Ecclesia in terris fructum capiet
Ipse in Cælis jam Mercedem
 Sic vive et apprecare lector
 Extinctus est contagio anno 1638
 Pridie nonas Maii ætatis anno nondum 53
 Ypris in episcopale Palatio.

The general meaning of this beautiful epitaph might be thus rendered. The following is not, however, an exact translation.

HERE LIES CORNELIUS JANSENIUS

Enough
 His virtues, erudition, and celebrity speak the rest
 Long the admiration of Louvain
 He here only began to be so
 Raised to the episcopal dignity
 That he might astonish Flanders
As lightning he shone and was Extinct
 So brief all human glory
 So short the longest course
 Yet shall he survive corruption
His Spirit lives in Augustinus
 He penetrated into the soul of his author
 and (if any mortal ever did) he
 as a most faithful interpreter
 unfolded his recondite depths of thought
 To this sole pious and arduous undertaking

he dedicated
 Affections most spiritual Researches most laborious
 and the whole of a life most precious
 He effected his work and with its completion expired
The church reaps the *fruits* of his labour on *Earth*
Whilst he enjoys their *full reward* in *Heaven*.
 Reader so live !

Render thanksgiving and pour out thy soul in prayer.

He died of the pestilence
 Anno 1638 on the 6th of May
 in the 53rd year of his age
 In the episcopal palace at Ypres.

Jansenius was scarcely dead, when it was announced to the public, that he had completed his *Augustinus*. A report too was circulated, that it was preparing for publication. It had, indeed, for some time, been generally known that the Bishop of Ypres, had been engaged in this work. The piety and erudition of the author, had raised men's expectations very high. His enemies, on the other hand, anticipated its completion as the moment of malicious triumph.

The little flock of M. de St. Cyran, had began to be more known in France. Their holy lives and deep devotion were indeed more ostensible than the peculiarities of their dogmas. Nevertheless, sufficient was known of the latter, to inspire the Jesuits with a hope of being able to affix some imputation of heresy on the work of Jansenius.

The Bishop of Ypres had, however, taken precautions, which ought to have effectually disarmed the malice of his enemies. Whilst he had always,

with the most undaunted boldness, defended the christian faith, it soon appeared that he felt the most profound humility respecting his own exposition of contested dogmas.

The work of Jansenius was entitled, *Augustinus Cornelii Jansenii episcopi, seu doctrina sancti Augustini de humanæ naturæ sanctitate ægritudinæ, medica adversus Pelagianos et Massilienses, Louvain, 1640; and at Rome, 1652, in fol.*


This work is divided into three parts. In the first, the learned author presented a luminous and very detailed exposition of the errors of the Pelagians, and Semi-pelagians. In this part of it, he frequently attacked Molina, Lessius, and all the theologians of the day, who came under the description of quietists. In the second part, he treats of divine grace; he speaks of the happiness enjoyed by angels in heaven, and by man in paradise. Every thing which St. Augustine has said relative to these subjects, is here arranged and combined in one whole; and all those objections are discussed, which are generally opposed to those doctrines, called by their partisans, the doctrines of grace. From thence he proceeds to describe the state of man after the fall: he describes his guilt and misery, and explains, in the words of St. Austin, the nature and fatal consequences of original sin. He declares that all men are born in sin, and are by nature, children of wrath. That all are guilty before God; and that they remain under the dominion of sin, dead in trespasses and sins, and sitting in thick darkness, till the grace

of the SAVIOUR shall arise to give them light ; and till He, who is the resurrection and the life, shall call them from a state of spiritual death, and command their bonds to be loosed. He then enters at large into the various arguments, by which many excellent men have been led to think that grace irresistible and inamissible.

In the third part of this elaborate work, Jansenius treats of the remedy of the fallen soul, and of its re-establishment in the liberty of the children of God. This division of his subject exhibits uncommon erudition. Every sentence, scattered throughout the voluminous works of St. Austin, which could possibly bear on the subject, is here collected into one focus, and arranged with the utmost perspicuity and exactness.

The outlines of this work had been traced in conjunction with M. de St. Cyran, at Bayonne. Its completion occupied the venerable author above twenty years. During this period, he had ten times read through the whole of St. Augustin's works, and thirty times carefully perused and compared those parts of them relating to the Pelagian controversy.

In addition to this immense labor, Jansenius had also thoroughly studied, and accurately collated every passage, throughout the voluminous works of the Fathers, which has any connexion with the doctrines in question. When we consider that Jansenius digested and arranged, in twenty years, the whole mass of sacred literature accumulated in thirteen centuries, it excites astonishment, that so



short a period could have sufficed to the execution of such a performance.

To this grand undertaking his life had been devoted : he lived to finish it. This great work, so long meditated, so deeply studied, so assiduously revised ; this work, doubtless so sincerely intended, (though, in the event, celebrated almost alone for the evils it occasioned), this work was completed the very day on which Jansenius expired.

Its truly admirable author acted as though he had foreseen the ferment to which it would give rise. His very last act manifested his deep humility, and his entire submission to a church, which he believed guided by the immediate influence of the divine Spirit.

With his dying hand, he wrote a letter to Pope Urban VIII. submitting his unpublished work to his inspection. In this letter he gave up the whole manuscript to the decision of the Romish see, and authorized the pontiff to alter or to rescind any part of it. Some of his expressions are to the following effect : “The expressions of St. Augustin are peculiarly profound. The various modes in which his writings have been interpreted, prove at once the difficulty of the exposition, and the incompetence of the expositors. Whether I have been more fortunate, whether I speak according to truth, or whether I am deluded by my own conjectures, can only be known by submitting my whole work to the test ; to that true and infallible light, before which the illusive glare of false splendor disappears ; to that divine touch-stone,

at whose touch every thing is ground to powder which possesses not the solidity of truth.—I therefore now lay my work at the feet of your holiness. I submit its contents implicitly to your decision, approving, condemning, advancing, or retracting, whatever shall be prescribed by the thunder of the apostolic see.”

Persons will differ in opinion, as to the propriety of choosing such an umpire. None probably will, however, disagree as to the propriety of such an one having been chosen by Jansenius, a catholic bishop. Whatever conclusion he formed of the measure itself, there are surely none who name the name of CHRIST, but what must venerate the truly christian humility of heart, by which it was dictated.

The letter of Jansenius was suppressed by his executors. They probably foresaw the opposition of the Jesuits, and feared, lest through their influence, the work should be suppressed altogether. However this may be, the existence of such a letter was never suspected, till the reduction of Ypres by the arms of Louis XIV. It then fell into the hands of the great Condé. He first made it public.

Jansenius had taken a double precaution. Just before his death he made a will. By this instrument he unreservedly abandoned both himself and his book, to the judgment and authority of the see of Rome. The following are his very words. He dictated them half an hour before his death.

“ *Sentio aliquid difficulter mutari. Si tamen Romana sedes aliquid mutari velit ; sum obediens filius ; et illius ecclesiæ in quâ semper vixi usque ad hunc lectum mortis obediens sum. Ita postrema voluntas mea est. Actum sextâ Maii, 1638.*” That is, “ I feel that it will be difficult to alter any thing. Yet, if the Romish see should wish any thing to be altered, I am her obedient son ; and to that church, in which I have always lived, even to this bed of death, I will prove obedient. This is my last will. Done 6th of May, 1638.”


Such were the sentiments entertained by Jansenius, to the end of his life. It is not a little surprising, to find him erected into an heresiarch immediately after his death.

Scarcely had Jansenius expired, when his executors hastened to disregard his will, and his opponents to insult his memory.

The Jesuits used all their influence to obtain the suppression of the work. The executors, on the contrary, strained every nerve to expedite the publication. They dreaded the credit of the Jesuits with the court of Rome. On this account, they wished the book to appear, before Rome had given her decision.

Meanwhile, numberless pamphlets were circulated on either side.

Whilst all good men must deplore the inveterate virulence which instigated the persecuting Jesuits, may not many persons join the wise and amiable Fenelon, in regretting the ardor of zeal with which the Jansenists were animated, in defending an



Obscure, and merely speculative doctrine? It might be observed, that good men are never likely to espouse a cause, which has not some important truth for its groundwork: but, on the other hand, that they are never so likely to exaggerate it, to misapply it, and to overlook the antagonist truths, which keep it in its due sphere of action, as when they are defending it against an opponent who is engaged in its overthrow. If this be the case, it may, perhaps, be thought that Jansenius would have done more wisely, had his system been founded on the work of St. Austin, previous to his discussions with Pelagius, and had he received with a prudent caution, what that great saint wrote under the heated influence of a warm and animated controversy.

The church of CHRIST is separated from infidels, by holding truth in opposition to falsehood. But the members of CHRIST, are severed from each other generally, by holding distinct truths exclusively; and by thus placing in opposition those truths they should hold in combination. Thus has it been with the grand principles of divine grace, which honours God, our Sovereign benefactor; and of free-will, which glorifies God, our impartial judge. Concluding, that if the one of these great truths were admitted, the other must be combated, the bulk of the professing world has continually been vibrating between the alternate extremes of antinomian fatalism, and pharisaic self-righteousness. And whilst each party has reaped the benefit of the truth it held, each has suffered from

the equally important one it unadvisedly rejected. From the times of the Pharisees and Sadducees, the Pelagians and Augustinians, the Jesuits and Jansenists, to the Arminians and Calvinists of the present day, the evils of such discussions have been sufficiently manifest. Whilst the true christian deplores the mischief these controversies have occasioned to the speculative controvertists on either side, he rejoices to see the most eminently pious, on both sides, led by the grace of God to receive in their *hearts*, even those very truths which formed the stumbling block to their *understanding*. Who that has chosen that more excellent way of love the apostle speaks of, will not join in saying, with St. Austin in his epistles, “*Si non est gratia Dei, quomodo salvat mundum? Si non est liberum arbitrium, quomodo judicat mundum?*” “If there be not (sovereign) free grace, how does God (graciously) save the world? If there be not (unrestricted) free will, how can God (righteously) judge the world?”

When points terminating in speculation, divide christians, the church may well mourn. To all, such controversies are dangerous. On merely carnal professors, they operate as a blind, veiling from their own mind the real motives which induce them to attack their more spiritual brethren. Whilst the mind is occupied in combating speculative opinions of good men, the heart which instigated the attack, is often set on by a lurking enmity against the piety connected with them. The corruption of the carnal

heart is really kindled against divine truth. Its blows are, in reality, aimed against her, whilst it screens itself under the specious pretence of attacking the extraneous opinions casually connected with her. The word of God itself cannot be broken. It is only when good men unwarily connect their own speculations with revealed truth, that they present a point vulnerable to the attacks of their adversaries. Nor is controversy perhaps less dangerous to the truly pious. With them it is but too apt to prove a snare. They forget the comparative importance of primary truths, whilst their strength is expended in maintaining opinions, alike doubtful and unimportant. It is lamentable to employ the arms with which men should combat for CHRIST, in fruitless contentions against their brethren ; in controversies, vain as they regard truth, but fatal as they respect love. How often have theological disputations, on non-essential points, proved the breach of the church, and the strong hold of infidelity !

Two years after it was first announced, the work of Jansenius made its appearance. War was immediately re-kindled by the Jesuits, with redoubled animosity. Multitudes of publications appeared against the *Augustinus*. Had they stopped there, it had been well.


Some amongst the Jesuits, were not content with attacking the reputation of Jansenius, and with traducing as an heresiarch, a man who had lived the life of a saint, and who had died, not

only in communion with the church, but exercising the sacred functions of a bishop. Their rancorous malice even pursued his remains beyond the grave.

About midnight, on the 10th of December, 1657, the inscription over the grave of Jansenius was surreptitiously removed, and the tomb itself so completely demolished, that not a vestige remained. Next morning, the chapter of Ypres discovered the indignity offered to their bishop. They were highly incensed, both at this treatment of their pastor, and at the insult to their authority. There was, however, no remedy, as it appeared, on inquiry, to have been done by the bishop succeeding Jansenius, at the instigation of the Jesuits.

In the year 1672, a second epitaph, written on a plain white marble slab, was placed where the monument had stood. This latter inscription consisted merely of the two first lines of the former one, with the age and date. Yet, although it conveyed no eulogium, it was not suffered to continue.

The Jesuits were so inveterate in their animosity, that they had it removed in less than a month after it was placed. A simple cross pattee on the paving-stone which covered his grave, was the only mark which distinguished the place of his interment. In the year 1733, a fact was revealed to the world, which had never, till then, been suspected. It was announced, in the *Histoire du Baïanisme*, p. 344, published by Father du Chesne.



This Jesuit asserts, that when the monument of Jansenius was first destroyed, his body was torn from the grave, and disposed of elsewhere. A few years afterwards the cathedral was fresh paved. No trace now remains, to mark the sepulchre of Jansenius. His arms, indeed, on one of the pillars of the church, still record his burial to have been within its precincts.

Notwithstanding the efforts of the Jesuits, the work of the bishop of Ypres appeared in print, about two years after the death of its author. The name of Jansenist was now for the first time heard. It was affixed to the friends of M. de St. Cyran, by those who wished to imply that their system was a new heresy, first broached by Jansenius. They called themselves the disciples of St. Augustin.

Much had been written on both sides. Many vexatious and oppressive proceedings had been resorted to, on the part of the Jesuits, and much had been endured on that of the Jansenists.

At length, Father Cornet, a Jesuit, and syndic of the faculty, produced five propositions. They were, it was insinuated, extracted from the work of Jansenius. These propositions were worded with the most artful ambiguity. The phrases were so contrived, as to be capable of two constructions, widely differing from each other. Taken in one point of view, the terms employed had a considerable resemblance to some used by Jansenius. On the other hand, they were affixed to such different ideas, and applied so differently,

that the meaning obviously conveyed was, in some instances, absolutely opposite to his. This paper, so carefully worded, and maliciously constructed, was laid before the Sorbonne, and before the apostolic see, as containing dangerous, false, and heretical doctrine.

It underwent a long and animated discussion. At length, the desired verdict was obtained. It was pronounced heretical, first by the Sorbonne, and afterwards by a bulle of Innocent X. A general assembly of the French clergy was summoned. Almost all the dignitaries of the Gallican church attended. With a very few exceptions, they united in the proscription of the new heresy.

The Jesuits had now gained their point. It was proposed and determined to draw up a formula, recapitulating the five propositions, and subjoining to them a declaration, that they were heretical. A decree was then issued, commanding the formulary to be signed by all who instructed children, and by all who pretended to benefices or orders.

The Jesuits already anticipated a triumph. They congratulated themselves on having laid a snare, into which they thought it impossible the friends of M. de St. Cyran could avoid falling. Should they sign the insidious formulary, it would involve the condemnation of their own works, and consequently of themselves. If, on the contrary, they refused their signatures, their heresy would be manifest. They would incur the most serious consequences, by setting at naught

the bulle of Pope Innocent. The measures of the Jesuits were already laid. They only awaited a refusal of signature, on the part of the Jansenists, as the expected signal to begin a vigorous persecution. In this calculation they were disappointed. The Jansenists unanimously signed the paper; each, at the same time, adding a line to his signature, denying the propositions to be in the book of Jansenius, and pointing out wherein they differed.

The Jesuits were enraged at having been thus foiled. They were not, however, deterred from their aim. A second application was made to the court of Rome. Another bulle was prepared, the terms of which were more explicit than those of the former. On the 16th of November, 1656, a bulle was fulminated by Alexander VII. confirming that of Innocent. It likewise proceeded to declare, that the propositions were not only heretical, but that they were likewise extracted from Jansenius. It concluded by expressly declaring, that the sense in which they were condemned, was the one in which they were stated in his *Augustinus*.


This bulle was no sooner published, than the bishops, under the influence of the Jesuits, drew up a second formulary. The words were express. It was calculated, they thought, to afford no means of escape. It was conceived in the following terms: "I condemn from my inmost soul, and by word of mouth, the doctrine of the five propositions, which are contained in the work of Cornelius

Jansenius. A doctrine which is not that of St. Augustin, whose sentiments Jansenius has misinterpreted.”

Such was the celebrated formulary, dictated by the malice, and extorted by the intrigue of the Jesuits. It proved the signal of all the persecutions that ensued.

When presented to the Jansenists, they all with one accord refused their signature.


They unanimously declared, that the catholic church, whilst she asserts the divine authority of the apostolic see, on subjects of faith, yet allows her only a human judgment as to matters of fact. The scripture, which cannot be broken, promises that divine influence of the Holy Spirit, which enables the church infallibly to distinguish true from false doctrine. But whence is the authority, and where is the necessity of divine revelation to instruct her in matters of fact ? From their very nature, they are objects of sense, not of faith ; and therefore belong to the province of reason, not of revelation. The heresy of the propositions was, they admitted, an object of faith ; their having been advanced by Jansenius, they contended to be a matter of fact. With respect, then, to their heretical nature, they cordially united with their brethren, and they implicitly submitted to the paramount authority of the apostolic see. With regard to the alleged fact, that such propositions were actually contained in the work of Jansenius, they could not but consider it as coming solely under the cognizance of individual judgment.



Whilst then they yielded a blind obedience to Rome, as to the former ; they preserved the liberty of maintaining a respectful silence regarding the latter.

No sooner was this answer returned, than the persecution burst forth from every quarter. The court, the Jesuits, and the clergy, united with one consent to oppress the Jansenists. Excommunications, fines, cruel banishments, and rigorous imprisonments, were everywhere inflicted. The state prisons became thronged. The threats of fire and of poison were not withheld. The Bastille was crowded with victims. Even recesses in the passages were converted into temporary cells.

Many of the peaceful inhabitants of Port Royal, were torn from their beloved seclusion. The recluses underwent cruel sufferings in the Bastille ; and a number of the nuns were separately imprisoned in different convents. There they were confined in narrow cells, and closely guarded. They were not only deprived of the necessary comforts of life, but were otherwise treated with disgraceful inhumanity. The nuns, to whom they were committed, were misguided by those blind guides, of whom the Scripture declares, that they compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and at length render him tenfold more the child of error than themselves. They forgot their religious characters, and commenced ruthless jailers. They persecuted the children of the Most High, and they deluded themselves into the idea, that they were doing God service.




A short respite was at length obtained. In this pacification, Madame de Longueville took the most distinguished part. This princess was possessed of extensive influence ; her political talents procured her great respect, and her beauty and wit rendered her generally beloved. At her instigation, and under her patronage, the archbishop of Sens, and the bishop of Chalons, and some others, drew up a plan for an accommodation. The duchess of Longueville wrote on the occasion a long letter to the pope. Clement IX. who had just ascended the chair of St. Peter, was a man of a benevolent and pacific spirit. He had long deplored the agitated state of the Gallican church. In this disposition, he rejoiced that an opportunity was offered to effect a reconciliation, without compromising the authority of the papal jurisdiction. A pacification was effected. The prison doors were opened, and the ecclesiastical censures were removed ; and those valuable persons, who so eminently belonged to the church of God, had rest for a season.

The peace, however, was not of long duration. Madame de Longueville died. A month after her decease, the persecution began with redoubled violence. The short suspension of eleven years, appeared only to have embittered the adversaries of Jansenius, without curtailing their power.

Persecuted on all hands, some perished in prison, others died in banishment.


The great Arnauld, who had refused a Cardinal's hat, died an exile, in a remote part of Flanders,



without one servant to attend him. Some wandered about in disguise ; others expired, worn out with fatigue and anxiety, praying for their afflicted brethren, and their still more unhappy persecutors.


Port Royal was the fountain, whence Jansenism had spread over France. That monastery felt the heaviest shock of the storm. For one century and two years, it stood in the midst of its enemies ; and its bright light shone with undiminished lustre. It gave a splendid and rare example of profound learning united with every christian virtue. The ear that heard its instruction, blessed it ; and the eye that saw its inhabitants, bore witness to them. It shone as a great light in the land, and its good works turned the hearts of men to glorify their Father in heaven. Its fame spread over the land, and its good report went forth abroad. Its blessed influence extended to the remotest parts of Europe. Several generations of its peaceful and pious inhabitants, had, indeed, perished amidst persecution ; but others still arose, endued with a double portion of their spirit. At length, the measure of their sufferings was complete ; these living stones so carefully fashioned by reiterated strokes, became fitted for the temple of the living God. They were ready to occupy that place in the church triumphant, they had so long and so faithfully maintained in the church militant.

Their adversaries were, at length, in wrath allowed to triumph. They were permitted at once



to finish their sufferings, and to complete the measure of their own iniquity. In October, 1709, Port Royal was destroyed. Its venerable abbey was levelled to the ground, and its innocent inhabitants were imprisoned for life, in separate monasteries. Few of them long survived their dispersion. Their removal was attended with circumstances of peculiar cruelty, and they soon expired, from the hardships of their journey, and the ill usage experienced in their prisons.


The site where Port Royal had stood, was ploughed up from its very foundation, so that not one stone remained upon another. Yet though the great and powerful were leagued together, to extinguish that burning and shining light, of whose illumination they were not worthy; yet its memory was still held in benediction. The peasants were accustomed to visit its ruins, and even the very children endeavoured to pick up some fragment of its sacred remains. The poor, as they returned from their labor, frequently turned out of their path, to visit the valley where Port Royal stood. They traced its lakes, and its gardens; they pointed out to each other the places where they had seen its saints, and, in the warmth of their affectionate gratitude, they recounted the beneficent miracles they imagined its hallowed ruins had wrought. The profound veneration expressed by the inhabitants for Port Royal, rekindled the malice of its enemies. The ashes of the saints who reposed there, were torn from their graves, and scattered by sacrilegious



hands. Five years after not a vestige remained of an institution, whose well-earned and extensive celebrity was only to be exceeded by the profound veneration and fervent admiration of those intimately acquainted with its rare endowments.

Whilst the benevolent shed a tear over the untimely fate of Port Royal, the earnest seeker after truth, will be tempted to make the important inquiry : What was the ground and root from which this rare assemblage of virtues sprung ? The faithful historian of Port Royal, can only anticipate the reply of the christian. The genuine fruits of faith, can only spring from the genuine root of faith. And the works of the spirit can only be wrought by the operation of the SPIRIT OF GOD. The piety of the Port Royalists arose from the same immutable source, from which all true religion ever has flowed, and from which, alone, the word of God assures us it ever can flow, however various the denominations by which its faithful followers may have been successively distinguished amongst their fellow men.

It was grounded on a supreme reverence for the word of God, and a daily and diligent study of its contents ; a deep practical conviction of the utter aberration of the human heart from God ; of its entire helplessness, and its insufficiency by nature for any one good thing ; a firm confidence in the atoning blood and merits of CHRIST, for pardon and reconciliation with God ; bearing the fruits of unreserved obedience to his SPIRIT, shed abroad in the heart. In short, an entire renun-



ciation of self, and an entire trust in CHRIST, for all that must be done *for* us by his merits, and *in* us by his SPIRIT.

The destruction of Port Royal des Champs may be considered as the death-blow to Jansenism. Many Jansenists indeed still continued in Flanders. And the subject was agitated for some years subsequent to this event. The expiration of Jansenism, as a matter engrossing public attention, may be dated about the time of Father Quesnel's death. He succeeded the great Arnauld as the champion of Jansenism, and may be considered as the last of that brilliant constellation, whose genius and piety had shed so splendid and beneficent a light over the end of the seventeenth, and beginning of the eighteenth century.

The principal leaders of the Jansenistic cause, succeeded each other as follows :

The death of Jansenius took place in	1638
M. du Vergier de Hauranne, Abbé de St.	
Cyran, died in	1643
The great Arnauld then took the lead, accom-	
panied by his friend and assistant Nicole, whose	
deaths occurred {	
Arnauld	1684
Nicole	* 1694


* The Jansenists still prevail much in Holland. They are still distinguished by their love of Biblical studies. On visiting their college at Amersfoort, I found Bibles open on the desks in all the students' cells. They informed me, a considerable portion of time was devoted to its perusal every day, in all their seminaries.

• The great Arnauld was succeeded by his intimate friend, Father Quesnel, who vigorously maintained the cause by his writings, and, at the court of Rome by delegate, till he expired at Amsterdam, in 1719.

The above mentioned are some of the chief controversial writers, who maintained the cause of the Jansenists. Their most valuable authors are, perhaps, those who have entered but little into the disputed points. Those who have contributed to improve the world by their learning, or who have edified the christian world, by their moral and experimental works. A library of this description might be collected, from the numerous and valuable writings of the recluses of Port Royal.

The principal works of Jansenius are Commentaries on the Evangelists, in quarto ; on the Pentateuch, in quarto ; on the Psalms, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes, at Antwerp, 1614, in folio. These works all manifest the deep erudition of their author, and are written with correctness and perspicuity. Besides this, he has written some works of controversy, now little read, and his celebrated commentary on St. Augustin, in folio, Louvain, 1640 ; and at Rouen, 1652. The latter edition is the best, and contains some essays omitted in that of Louvain.

Leydecker has written the life of Jansenius in Latin, octavo, Utretcht, 1695. See also, *Histoire Ecclesiastique du Dixseptieme Siécle*, par Dupin ; and *l'Histoire des Cinq Propositions de Jansenius*, par Dumas.



SELECT MEMOIRS
OF
P O R T R O Y A L .

SELECT MEMOIRS
OF
P O R T R O Y A L .

Adoranda est VERITAS etiam si cruci affixa.

MEDITATION,

CHIEFLY FROM NICOLAS FONTAINE'S INTRODUCTION
TO HIS MEMOIRS OF PORT ROYAL.

N. B. Nicolas Fontaine was one of the last surviving recluses, and composed his memoirs at a very advanced age at Melun, whither he retired on being expelled from Port Royal.

O THOU that hearest prayer, and to whom all flesh shall come ; before Thee, O Father of Spirits, who searchest the very intents and ground of the heart, do I desire to present myself in spirit and in truth. And in thy immediate and most holy presence, do I wish to retrace all the mercies thy infinite goodness has vouchsafed me, from early infancy even unto grey hairs.

But who shall worthily number the multitude of thy mercies, or how shall the impure creature speak, without profanation, of the infinitely holy Creator ?

Do thou bestow that preparation of the heart which may render all the words of my mouth, and the meditations of my heart, acceptable in thy

sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer ; may thy blessed Spirit so open my lips, that my mouth, touched as with a coal from the living altar, may less unworthily shew forth thy praise.

“ Bless the Lord, O my soul,” exclaims the royal psalmist ; and as the means by which his soul may truly at all times praise Thee, he immediately adds, “ and forget not all his benefits.”

That I then may have that deeply engraven remembrance of all thy mercies, which is the alone solid and immutable foundation of true gratitude ; it is my wish to record the days which are past, and the mercies by which they have been marked. But above all I wish, as the chief and most especial mercy, to retrace the remembrance of those thy eminently pious servants, with whom thou vouchsafedest me the unspeakable favor and privilege of passing so many years of my life.

The profound solitude in which I dwell, and the recluse life I lead, remote alike from every secular interruption or pursuit, afford ample opportunity for surveying at leisure events so long since past.

Do Thou, O Lord, bestow thy benediction ! the most spiritual employment unless performed in the light of thy spirit, can neither prove an acceptable mode of employing the present, nor a stimulus to the soul against the future.

The rapidity with which time so swiftly passes away, and the certainty that it will so very shortly elude my grasp for ever, confirms me in

this design. So frail is man, that the memory soon loses what the eyes no longer behold ; and time, which has already torn from me all those who were once so very dear, is continually occupied in obliterating every vestige of the past.

May I, then, with equal industry, endeavour to rescue from its devouring gulph, some valuable records, some fond remembrances, which may prove substantial, amidst the wide desolation ; and which, although Port Royal be no more, and though its saints be no longer seen amongst men, may yet prove effectual, to direct the path and to cheer the hearts of those that loved them.

Time has indeed laid waste all those beloved scenes, which once seemed most dear in this life, but do thou enable me, O Lord, to preserve that deeply engraven remembrance of them, which may prove constantly beneficial for the next.

Let me, then, in the deep solitude of my cell, endeavour to recal scenes which are so long since passed away ; and persons, whose place amongst men has so long known them no more. And whilst my heart assists my memory, to retrace, with the vividness of reality, so many admirable examples that were once so familiar to me ; do thou, O Lord, strengthen my soul ; and enable my heart rather to bless thee for the mercies that are passed, than to give way to the pang of natural affection, at the recollection that they have now no existence upon earth, but in the revered remembrance of those who, like myself, once sat at their feet.

Yet as there is a worldly sorrow which commences by alienating the heart from God, and terminates in working death ; so there is a godly sorrow, which begins by humbling the soul beneath thy chastening hand, and goes on to produce the peaceable fruits of righteousness unto eternal life.

Do thou, O Lord, bestow that preparation of the soul, which alone can render my tears not like those of the ungodly, which as an angry torrent, loudly murmuring, lays waste the land over which it precipitates itself ; but like the tears of the godly, which as a silent though often a deep river, yet fertilizes and diffuses rich blessings over that very soil which it most deeply overflows.

In what manner can a recluse like myself occupy the intervals of leisure, more agreeably, than in the recollection of other recluses, who at first exhibited to him the model of that life, holy, spiritual, retired from men, but continually conversant with THEE, in which his highest and only true delight consists ?

It is indeed my sorrow to have survived those for whose sake most willingly I would have laid down my life ; yet, in the dreary void which surrounds me, it is still a sweet consolation to renew, in imagination, their dear and revered remembrance. Though so many years have elapsed since Port Royal has been no more, yet, even in the profound solitude of this narrow cell, even now with the eye of my heart, I still seem to be-

hold them. Methinks I still follow every gesture as they converse ; and that I still sit at their feet as I used to do, dwelling with reverential and delighted contemplation on every varied expression of their saintly countenances, speaking amidst the holiness of their very silence. Still, as I write, do I seem once more transported to the walks of Port Royal, and I almost forget for a moment the sad reality.

I can scarcely persuade myself that desolation has actually laid waste all the well known scenes of that once highly favored spot ; that her walls are overthrown from their very foundations ; that the sacred ashes of her hallowed dead have been scattered to the winds by impious hands ; and that, of all her saintlike inhabitants, I alone remain, whose place on earth shall ever know him more.

Thou, O Lord, triest the heart and the reins ; thou seest at this moment the very ground and intent of my heart ! thou alone seest the love, mingled with reverence, with which I cherish the sacred remembrance, of these thy eminently devoted servants. Do thou, O Lord, vouchsafe that the recollection may at least revive some faint spark of that heavenly fire, which even their very presence has so often kindled in my heart ! that thus those, whose wise precepts and saintlike example first pointed out the narrow path to my youth, may still conduct me through the vale of declining years, to that blessed haven, whither they are long since safely arrived !

Not that I pretend to turn author ; God forbid an imagination so vain, in an hermit above seventy-two years of age ; and whose infirmities, as well as whose choice, bid him live as in the continual presence of death.

Whilst I note down faithfully, but succinctly, many of the scenes which are past ; I write with a view, not merely to illustrate their memory, but to promote my own edification.

I may truly say with St. Jerome, “ In retracing such virtues on my memory, I am more occupied for myself than for them, for I desire more benefit to my own heart, than I can bestow honor upon them.” Indeed, I deeply feel that I ought rather to implore their forgiveness, lest I should presume to touch their virtues with unhallowed hands. It is not then from the delusion of a groundless presumption that I attempt to write ; though I confess, that I do feel that strength of affection, which would sometimes make me wish that the whole world might know what such men really were ; and, from an earnest desire that every one might, even as I do, estimate the unspeakable blessing which was bestowed upon those, who were honored with their friendship.

Nor do thou, O Lord, suffer me to forget our unhappy persecutors,—those mistaken men, who vainly thought they were doing God service, by pursuing thy devoted servants even unto death. If, after I depart hence, these pages should meet any human eye ; or that this brief and inadequate sketch, should by any chance fall into the hands

of any one individual, of this unhappy number ; do thou, O Lord in mercy, render it a real blessing to his soul ! Be pleased so to send forth thy spirit of truth and love, that the scales may fall from his eyes, and the veil be removed from his heart ; that he may see what manner of men were those whose life he counted madness, and whose end folly ; and that, considering the end of their conversation, who being dead, yet speak by a bright example ; he may, in return for the persecutions he ignorantly heaped upon them, receive from their instrumentality, the unspeakable mercy of eternal life.

O my God, thou who seest on the one hand my ardent desire, and on the other the feebleness of my powers ; pardon, I beseech thee, the one as the effects of human frailty, and do thou uphold the other as the fruit of that love, thy holy Spirit has wrought in me, towards thy highly favoured servants.

And now, O Lord, I finally beseech thee, truly to hallow unto thyself the work, which in thy name, I am about to commence ; keep me, O Lord, in everlasting fellowship with this blessed portion, as with the whole of thy church triumphant ; and may I, with them, one day rest in thy most holy presence, at whose right hand are rivers of joy, and pleasures for evermore. *Amen.*

MEMOIRS.

CHAP. I.

Institution and Reform of Port Royal.—Mère Angélique.—M. Agnès.—Journée du Guichet.

THIS celebrated monastery is about six leagues distance from Paris. It is situated in a wooded valley, near Chevreuse, and is within view of the little villages of St. Lambert and Vaumurier.

The abbey of Port Royal is one of the most ancient belonging to the order of Citeaux. It owes its origin to Mathilde de Garlande, wife of Matthew, Lord of Marli, and younger son of the house of Montmorenci. This nobleman, on his departure for the holy land, left his lady a considerable sum to be expended in works of piety. In order to fulfil her husband's intention, Mathilde consulted Eudes or Otho of Sully, bishop of Paris, who advised her to found a monastery. With this view she bought the fief of Porrois, or Port Royal; and, in the year 1204, the foundations of the abbey were laid by Mathilde, under his superintendance. The church and monastery of Port Royal, were erected by the same architect

who built the cathedral at Amiens. It was in like manner distinguished for the beauty of its architecture. It was of the early pointed order, the same as that of which the cathedral of Salisbury affords such a beautiful English specimen. The dress of Port Royal was originally precisely that of the Cistercian order, white woollen, with a black veil ; but towards the middle of the seventeenth century, they adopted on their white scapulary, a large scarlet cross, as the symbol of the "Institute of the Holy Sacrament," a rule then super-added to their own. The discipline of this monastery, like that of most others, declined in process of time. Like the generality of religious houses of the same order, it exhibited, towards the close of the sixteenth century, a lamentable and awful degree of relaxation. The rule of St. Bennet was scarcely known there. The retirement of the cloister was unobserved. The revenues, which ought to have been diffused in charity, were converted to purposes of luxury. Self-indulgence had banished all regularity, and a worldly spirit influenced the whole community.

At this juncture the abbess died. It was, at this period, a very common abuse to appoint children to ecclesiastical offices, in order to secure the revenue to the family.

Marie Angélique Arnauld was nominated abbess of Port Royal, before she had completed her eleventh year. She was scarcely eight years old, when she assumed the habit of the order. At nine she made her profession, before the General

of Citeaux. He gave her his benediction eighteen months afterwards.

How deep are the judgments of God, and his ways past finding out ! How little probability did there appear that the child, thus iniquitously elected, should prove the very instrument, in the hands of God, to restore discipline in the order, and to lay the foundation of Port Royal.

The nuns rejoiced at the appointment ; they promised themselves a long period of unbounded liberty. Their joy was not of very long duration.

The young abbess at first, indeed, only thought of devising means of passing her time agreeably. Yet it was soon observed, that if her occupations bore no marks of piety, her very-recreations, however, were such as indicated a powerful and vigorous mind, a sound judgment, and a superior degree of intelligence. Her favorite book was Plutarch's lives ; a work which, it has often been justly observed, has laid the foundation of more great characters than perhaps any other.

Scarcely had she attained the age of seventeen, before God was pleased to effect her conversion. It was accomplished by means most unlikely.

A capuchin, wearied of a religious life, had emancipated himself from his superiors. His conduct had, in many respects, been reprehensible. He therefore determined to quit France, and to abjure the catholic religion.^a It so happened,

^a I here copy from the Port Royal authors, but many circumstances seem to favor the idea, that the only error imputed to

that he passed through Port Royal in his way. This abbey is also the parish church.

Being entirely ignorant of this man's misconduct, the abbess, from motives of civility, requested him to preach. The capuchin, meanwhile, was as little acquainted with the characters of the nuns, as they were with his. He imagined them to be eminently pious. He therefore preached a most alarming discourse. He expatiated largely on the misery and dangers of sin, and on the power and blessings of true religion. He also dwelt forcibly on the dangers of the world ; and portrayed, in the most lively manner, those peculiar advantages which are furnished by a monastic life.

The young abbess was forcibly struck. From that hour she formed the resolution to devote herself wholly to God. And not only so, she resolved, by divine grace, that as soon as she was converted herself, she would strengthen her sisters, and reform every abuse in the monastery committed to her charge.

At this period she was taken dangerously ill. During a confinement of several months, her resolution strengthened, and her piety and experience deepened. Meditation, prayer, and reading the Scriptures, divided her solitary hours.

She came from her chamber a new person. Her habits, her manners, her views, were totally changed;

this Capuchin was, his becoming a protestant, and conscientiously abjuring the errors of the church of Rome. And hence, that the conversion of the M. Angélique, was the fruit of the faithful exposition of the gospel of Christ.

her mind was always powerful; those powers were now exercised, not in the gratification of self, but in establishing a solid and beneficial reform.

She had some difficulties to encounter; but nothing could shake her perseverance. The Mère Angélique's first trials arose from her own family, who, though eminently respectable, and even sincerely pious, yet considered the reform projected by their daughter as savouring of righteousness overmuch.


The relaxed state in which the young abbess found her monastery, has been already mentioned. Port Royal indeed, at the end of the sixteenth century, exhibited a deplorable state of irregularity. The rule of St. Bennet was scarcely known there; enclosure was no longer observed. A worldly spirit had entirely banished regularity. Their ignorance of the first principles of religion was deplorable. No sermons were ever preached there except at professions, which, in a community of twelve persons, rarely took place. Their confessors led a life alike unexemplary, spending their time chiefly in the pleasures of the chase. The nuns, meanwhile devoted themselves entirely to dress and worldly pastimes. They wore starched muslins, and not only suffered their hair to appear, but dressed it with care. They appeared in gloves and masques, like the most fashionable Parisian ladies; and during the carnival, they even gave public masquerades.

In this degraded state of the convent, the young abbess first determined on establishing her

reform. She saw, however, that it would be impossible ever to carry it into effect, or even to make any durably serious impressions, unless she began by excluding her community from the world, and giving them time for reflection, by removing the contagion of dissipated society and worldly conversation. She resolved, therefore, to re-establish that enclosure which the rule of St. Bennet so strictly enjoins, and which their own vows obliged them to obey.

She therefore announced to the community, that in future, the nuns could only be allowed to see their relations in the parlour, and that no visitor should be permitted to enter the interior of the monastery. That none might complain of these regulations, her own father and mother, M. and Madame Arnauld were likewise included.

An occasion of enforcing this rule soon after presented itself. A little after Easter a profession took place. A large assemblage of company from Paris, were, on this occasion, attracted to Port Royal to witness the ceremony. Not one person was admitted into the interior of the house. This rule, which, though strictly enjoined by their order, now appeared, from disuse, like an innovation, excited many murmurs, which the nuns endeavoured to appease, by observing that, in the first place it was a necessary conformity to a solemn vow ; and, secondly, that even, the very nearest relations of the abbess would be treated precisely in the same manner.



M. Arnauld could but seldom visit his daughter at Port Royal, on account of his professional avocations; so that the Mère Angélique's constancy was not likely to be put to the test before the recess of the palace. At length, however, the vacation drew near, and, with it, the time of his accustomed visit.

After many internal difficulties and conflicts between her duty and strong natural affection, being fully convinced that no permanent reformation would ever be effected, unless she set, herself, an example of separation from the world; she wrote a long and very respectful letter to her mother, telling her the state of her mind.

She said, that having, by the divine grace, been taught to see the necessity of a thorough reform; and, by the same grace, found a willing mind in her nuns to embrace the regular discipline and enclosure they had vowed to maintain; she entreated both her and her father not to place any obstacles in her way, and not to be displeased if she entreated the favour of them that, in the event of their intending her the honor of a visit at the approaching vacation, they would not take it amiss if she received them in the parlour, instead of inviting them, as heretofore, into the interior of the monastery. But that, if they should feel any repugnance to comply with this condition, she entreated them, in that case, rather to deprive her of the honor of their visit, because she was obliged to forewarn them, she should then be under the very painful necessity of refusing them admission.

Madame Arnauld imparted her daughter's letter to her husband; he smiled, never imagining that a child who was so tenderly attached to him, would ever summon up sufficient constancy to execute her intention.

He immediately fixed a day to go to Port Royal, with his family.

Himself and Madame Arnauld, with his son, M. Arnauld d'Andilly, and his two daughters, M^{de} le Maitre, and M^{lle} Anne Arnauld, formed the party.

The M. Angélique was informed of their intention, which she learned with painful dismay; as, in all things, she had ever shewn her parents implicit obedience. Nevertheless, she knew that He who had commanded her to quit all and follow him, has declared, that whoso loveth father or mother more than him, is not worthy of him. She prepared herself by supplication and prayer, and by the entire sacrifice of natural feelings, for this day of bitter trial.

The struggle was severe, but it did not shake her fidelity towards God.

The day of test at length arrived. Early on the Friday morning, before Michaelmas day, the M. Angélique received intelligence that her family had set out. She immediately ordered the keys of admission to be delivered into her own hands, by the nuns to whose care they were usually confided. She then went into the church, and prostrated herself before God. After a flood of tears, she earnestly besought him to prepare her heart, and fortify her with the strength necessary not

to betray his cause ; to enable her to struggle through the severe conflict at hand ; letting his grace overcome nature, and upholding her to maintain the truth he had committed to her, even against those whom she held most dear.

Whilst she was yet engaged in prayer, a distant sound of carriages was heard on the brow of the hill, and winding along the avenue ; and, a moment after, a loud and redoubled knocking at the grand entrance-gate, announced the company was come. The M. Angélique, who, on the first sound of the carriages, had arisen and gone to the gate herself, opened the wicket.

M. Arnauld commanded her to throw open the great gates. She, clasping her hands in the humblest attitude of entreaty, besought him to go into a little parlour by the side of the gate, where she might speak to him. M. Arnauld, astonished, repeated his commands, urging and insisting upon compliance : then, rising louder and louder in tone, he, in a voice of thunder, commanded her instantly to unbar the gates.

The M. Angélique, pale and trembling, looked up to God : then, with a tremulous voice, but with a determined mind, repeated the same entreaties.

M. Arnauld, absolutely enraged at this unexpected resistance, spoke in the harshest manner to his daughter, upbraiding her with the foulest ingratitude. M. d'Andilly, then about nineteen, young, and full of fire, assumed a still higher tone ; and thinking to avenge a supposed outrage to his

father and mother, overwhelmed her with the most insulting and injurious epithets ; taxing her with being a parricide, a monster of ingratitude, &c.

The vociferation was dreadful ; and the alarm was spread on all sides, both within and without the convent. Nor did the nuns forget, that M. Arnauld was a munificent patron, without whose benefactions the community must have wanted, (as it might yet be destitute of,) the first necessities of life. The firmness, however, of the M. Angélique remained unshaken. M. Arnauld, finding that he made no progress, demanded his two daughters, (the M. Agnès, and her sister Marie Claire, at that time only nine years old,) then residing in the convent, to be brought out to him immediately. M. Angélique, collected and tranquil in the midst of the storm, gave one of the confidential sisters the key of a little door, which opened into the church, and charged her to let the two sisters out by that private door. The two children advanced, with much recollection and gravity of manner, each in her little nun's dress. M. d'Andilly, seeing them approach, ran up to meet them, and began inveighing most bitterly against their eldest sister. The little abbess Agnès, with much of her characteristic mildness and gravity, calmly replied, " My brother, our sister has done nothing amiss. She has only performed her duty, and what she is enjoined and obliged to observe, by the ecclesiastical canons of the council of Trent." M. Andilly

could scarcely forbear laughing at the solemnity of the little abbess's address, and the demure gravity with which it was delivered. His rage, however, got the better ; and he exclaimed, " So then, here is another truly, quoting the canons and the councils !"

At last M. Arnauld, seeing he prevailed nothing, determined to return, and ordered the horses.

He handed his family into the carriages, remaining himself last ; till as he was putting his foot on the step, he suddenly paused, and turning back, said he must go for a moment into the parlour to say one final word to the abbess. The Mère Angélique entered on the other side ; but scarcely had she opened the blinds of the grate, when she perceived an expression of grief in her father's countenance, which affected her beyond expression. He paused, as though composing his voice with difficulty, and then with effort, and in a very few words, said, " that she could not but remember the early kindness and affection he had always shewn her : that he looked from her, his eldest daughter, for affection, the only reward a parent wishes, but that her ingratitude compelled him in his declining years, to declare a final farewell ; for he was fully determined never to see her face more." He then paused, and with a look of the deepest feeling, added, " I shall indeed never see you more ; yet for my sake, O spare your health, I entreat you ; and if you have a spark of the remembrance of my affection left ; do not injure it by indiscreet austerities."

Hitherto the natural strength of her character, or rather the grace of God, shed abroad in her heart; had supported the M. Angélique; and rendered her invulnerable to reproach; but at this totally unexpected appeal, and above all at the touching manner with which it was accompanied, her heart was pierced with the most poignant grief; her body could no longer endure the severity of the conflict; she fainted, and fell motionless and senseless at his feet.

In an instant the whole face of affairs was changed. M. Arnauld no longer remembered any offence. He only felt he was a father. Doubtful if his daughter retained life, he called, and cried, and knocked for help. But the sisters, instead of running to the parlour, took flight; supposing the doors of the monastery were about to be forced open. At length, with much difficulty, they were made to understand they were wanted instantly, to assist her. When she began to recover and open her eyes, she saw her father still at the grate, and in the greatest uneasiness.

With much difficulty, she made an effort to speak, and besought him not to leave Port Royal that day. The request was now become unnecessary. The past was already forgotten. M. Arnauld only thought of the situation of his daughter, and promised to accede to all her wishes. A little bed was then brought down to her in the parlour, on which she was laid, and M. Arnauld, having remained at Port Royal all that, and the following day, M. Angélique calmly, but with every mark

of deep feeling, explained to him the reasons of her conduct.

No sooner was tranquillity thus unexpectedly established, than the M. Agnès and her sister were allowed again to enter the convent, and every thing went on as usual.

From that memorable day, called in the annals of Port Royal, “*La journée du Guichet*,” the M. Angélique found the firmest support from every member of her own family. Thus the very day on which she was enabled, by divine grace, to abandon father, mother, brother, sister, yea, and almost her own life also, to follow Christ, she received an hundred fold, by laying the foundation of the permanence of her reform, and of the conversion and warm co-operation of every member of her numerous family, besides that of an innumerable company of saints, now rejoicing with her in the presence of Him, at whose right hand are rivers of joy, and pleasures for evermore.

In five years the monastery was entirely changed. The whole community presented a pattern of piety, charity, industry, self-denial, regularity, and every good work.

Port Royal was the first house that was reformed in the order of Citeaux. The change, consequently, excited considerable attention. As usual, opinions were divided.

The Rev. M. Angélique’s sister, the M. Agnès of St. Paul, was two years younger than herself. This lady was, at six years old, nominated abbess of St. Cyr. M. Agnès was of a very different

disposition from her sister. She was not distinguished for the same masculine energy of mind and resolute spirit, as the Mère Angélique. She rather possessed passive, than active strength of character. But her understanding was solid, though not brilliant; her mind was well stored by studies not common to her sex; her judgment was clear and accurate; her heart and affections temperate, and well balanced. Her disposition was placid; and she had feared God from her earliest youth. At nine years old she had learnt all the Psalter by heart, as well as the church service, which she never failed attending with admirable punctuality. The Mère Agnès had always felt averse to assume the office of abbess. She knew it involved an heavy responsibility, and she was aware of her incapacity worthily to fulfil it. She had ever been distinguished for unfeigned humility, and for a warm admiration of her sister.

A little incident has frequently been related, which is very characteristic of the early disposition of the two sisters.

When quite children, the M. Agnès, scarcely being five years old, their grandfather M. Marion, told them they should both be nuns; "Since you wish it grandpapa, I am very willing," returned the eldest, "but then it is on condition that I shall be abbess." "You shall both be abbesses, my dears," returned their grandfather. At this, the children quite delighted, ran to announce their new dignity to the whole house.

Presently, however, the little Agnès returned to M. Marion, with a grave and thoughtful countenance, and asked to speak to him alone. Astonished at the child's serious look, he asked her what was the matter? "Grandpapa," said she, "I come to tell you I will not be abbess; I hear that abbesses will give an account to God of the souls under their care, and I have been considering that I shall have enough to do to take care of my own."

"Not I," said the future reformer, the little Angélique, who was following her, "I for my part will be abbess; and I will take good care, grandpapa, to make my nuns thoroughly do their duty."

Not long after, this lady took her as coadjutrix in the direction of the monastery of Port Royal. Thus was the reform solidly established.

CHAP. II.

Maubuisson.—Madame d'Etrées.

MEANWHILE, the fame of Port Royal, and of the M. Angélique, extended itself over all France. Numbers of pious individuals, in different convents, had long been mourning in secret over the relaxation of their own communities. They earnestly desired a restoration of the ancient discipline ; yet they knew not where to begin.

In this perplexity they applied to the M. Angélique. Petitions were sent from various convents to the abbess of Port Royal ; she was entreated to undertake the establishment of the reform they so anxiously wished for. At first, she replied that she had no authority to quit her own monastery. Requests were, however, represented by such a multiplicity of houses, that she was at length ordered, by the General of Citeaux, either to go in person, or to send some of her community, in order to establish the reform wherever it was desired.

The M. Agnès had now been for some years initiated into the plans of her sister. She was at this time equally competent with herself, either to supply her place at Port Royal, or to carry on the reform elsewhere.

These ladies, or some of their principal assistants, successively visited the monasteries of Maubuisson, Lys, St. Aubin, St. Cyr, Gomerfontaine, Tard, the Isles d'Auxerres, and many other places.

In several of these houses they met with encounters, which might furnish the subject of volumes. In none did they meet with more difficulties than at Maubuisson.

It was in the year 1619, that the M. Angélique received an order from the General of the order of Citeaux, to undertake the superintendance of the monastery of Maubuisson,^a whose abbess had been lately expelled, on account of her irregular conduct.

^a The Royal Abbey of Maubuisson, is one of the most opulent and ancient of the order of Citeaux. Many royal personages are buried there, and its antiquities render it an object of curiosity. It possessed a very considerable number of Baronies and Seigneuries, which extended to a considerable distance; many villages were also included under its domination. Throughout the districts appertaining to each, the jurisdiction of the lady abbess extended; and the whole civil authority was vested in courts of her appointment, and all the subordinate officers derived their authority from her. The extent of power of these courts, so far exceeded those of courts leet, and courts baron, in England, that they might, in comparison, be termed absolute. The superiority of this monastery was eagerly sought, even by personages of the blood royal.

For a fuller account of this splendid establishment, its jurisdiction, the homage paid the abbess, its antiquities, and the intrigues formed to obtain it for Madame d'Orleans, we refer the reader to the *Vie de la M. des Agnes Suireau, abbesse de Maubuisson, et de Port Royal, par La Sœur Eustoquie de Flescelles de Bregy, religieuse du Monastere de Port Royal des Champs.*

The M. Angélique was therefore commissioned to take the temporary direction of that richly endowed abbey, in order to establish a solid and permanent reformation, before a new superior was nominated.

The causes of the abbess of Maubuisson's expulsion were as follows :—This lady was sister to the celebrated Gabrielle d'Etrées. She was at first abbess of Bertancourt, in the diocese of Amiens ; but was afterwards, through the influence of her sister, translated by Henry^b the Fourth, to

^b The means of Madame d'Etrées' nomination to this important post, were not more creditable to the honor of Henry IV. than the motive of it was to his piety. It took place as follows :—Henry IV. being on a visit to Gabrielle d'Etrées, at the monastery of Bertancourt, where she resided with her sister the abbess, she asked the king to place her sister nearer Paris : the king replied he would take the matter into consideration ; but that no monastery at that time occurred to his recollection, which would be proper. She replied, there was the magnificent abbey of Maubuisson : the king answered, that could not be, since the superiority was not in the gift of the crown, but that the abbess there was always elected by the community : he added, he would, however, see what could be done. Accordingly he shortly after took a hunting excursion, in the vast forests which surround this magnificent abbey, and form a part of its extensive domain ; after which he rode up to the Abbatial lodge, asking to pay his respects to the lady abbess. The lady who then filled that place, was Madame de Puisieux, who had been elected by the community on account of her piety and good conduct. In the course of conversation, the king, as though by accident, said to her, “ Madame l'Abbesse, pray from whom is it that you hold your appointments to this abbacy ? ” The lady abbess, little suspecting treachery in the guest she was so hospitably entertaining, or dishonor in a royal personage, respectfully and cordially answered, “ Sire, permit me to receive them from you,

the important and lucrative post of abbess to the monastery of Maubuisson ; which was one of the most powerful and opulent abbeys in the kingdom.

The conduct of Madame d'Etrées, during the five and twenty years she presided over this vast establishment, corresponded but too well with the unholy grounds of her nomination. The irregularities, and dissipation of the monastery of Maubuisson, were long the topics of public animadversion and censure. The infamy of their evil report spread throughout the land, and went on increasing, till its scandalous irregularities at length became a public disgrace to the order ; so that Louis XIII. being informed of their proceedings, issued a peremptory order in 1617, to the abbot of Citeaux, commanding him to institute an immediate inquiry into their conduct, and apply, without delay, the most powerful and efficacious remedies.

The abbot of Citeaux^c was an amiable as well as a pious man. He wished to conduct the whole


when it pleases your Majesty." The king, suddenly changing his tone, replied, "That I must first consider of." He then rose, and withdrew, sending word to this good nun, that he should bestow the abbey on another. He immediately sent for bulles from Rome, and shortly after himself took Madame d'Etrées to Maubuisson, held the chapter, and, citing the unadvised words of the abbess as a formal resignation, compelled the nuns to promise obedience to this lady, the details of whose scandalous conduct we shall not record.—*See Relat. de la Vie de la Mère des Anges*, p. 14.

^c Dom Boucherat, Abbot of Citeaux, and General of the whole order.

of this disagreeable affair, with all possible tenderness to the parties concerned ; and endeavoured, as far as might be consistent with the thorough discharge of his duty, to avoid all unnecessary exposure, both in consideration to Madame de Maubuisson herself, and to her very numerous and highly respectable family connexions.

He therefore commissioned a few of the most pious and venerable persons amongst the religious of his order, to visit the monastery in a private manner ; informing themselves on the spot, how far the reports which had gone abroad were well founded. After which, they were to take an opportunity of respectfully, but firmly remonstrating with the lady abbess, on the impropriety of her conduct ; inviting her to reform her monastery, and to prevent any further step being necessary, by herself introducing regularity and discipline into her community, and thus doing away all those grounds of public scandal, which had given rise to an investigation on the part of the throne itself ; and which, in all events, must ultimately terminate in the establishment of a most thorough reform.

The venerable delegates of the abbot of Citeaux, were exceedingly ill received. Nay, so far was the abbess from paying them the respect due, both to their character and their official capacity ; that she actually seized and imprisoned them in one of the towers of her abbey, where she subjected them to the most infamous treatment ; and even went so far, as to detain them many days without food.



Madame de Maubuisson's view was to intimidate M. de Citeaux. Well aware of the weight of influence of her own extensive, and powerful family connexions, she imagined that the abbot would never dare to provoke the overwhelming crush of their united opposition, by any further procedure.

Having, therefore, ignominiously dismissed his commissioners, she vainly flattered herself, that the whole business was for ever set at rest.

Affairs continuing on precisely the same footing at Maubuisson, if indeed they did not grow worse ; the abbot, who was still unwilling to resort to harsh measures, sent a second commissioner in due form, and accompanied by several attendants.

This second messenger, the abbess treated yet worse than the first. She incarcerated him and all his suite, in one of the towers of the abbey ; keeping them close prisoners, and allowing them nothing but bread and water. Nay, she even carried her audacity and insolence to so unprecedented a length, as to have them severely scourged every day. Happily, however, they contrived after four days to effect their escape, by squeezing through the narrow window of their dungeon, and then letting themselves down.

It is superfluous to add, that they did not fail instantly to visit the abbot, and to put him in full possession of all that had passed.

The General, seeing nothing was to be gained by condescension to this froward lady, immediately repaired to Paris, in order to confer with her

relatives, on the best means of checking disorders, which, as he observed, brought down a scandal, not merely on the ancient order of Citeaux, but which likewise affixed a disgraceful stigma on their own noble family. Amongst the persons he consulted, were the Cardinal and the Field Marshal D'Etrées, her brothers ; and the Cardinal de Sourdis, her cousin.

The abbot of Citeaux found these noble lords and Eminences fully disposed to favor his views, and to lend their most cordial co-operation in his plans. They were themselves, at this juncture, highly incensed against the abbess for her conduct, as it respected her younger sister, who had been lately permitted to visit Maubuisson, and whom she had clandestinely married, without the participation of her relations, to the Count de Sanzé. This young man's family were but little respected, and his own idle and dissipated habits were but too notorious. He, as well as many others, gay and thoughtless young men, his companions, were accustomed to spend nearly the whole of their time in this ill regulated monastery : nor was it possible that the exalted and highly reputable house of Etrées, should afford any sanction or countenance to a connection, on so very many accounts inadmissible.

Having obtained the concurrence of her relatives, the abbot of Citeaux announced his intended visit to Madame d'Etrées ; and immediately after made his appearance, with a numerous retinue, at the gates of the abbey of Maubuisson.

On his entrance into the monastery, he was not a little astonished at the disrespect of being received by the community only, without their abbess. It was in vain that he repeatedly sent to request the favor of her company, and afterwards summoned her to take her place as abbess, in the chapter he was about to hold. The lady sent a positive refusal ; nor could any solicitations induce her to make her appearance.

The General then repaired, notwithstanding the informality of the abbess's non-appearance, into the chapter-house ; and the whole community being assembled, he opened the business by an official and public declaration of the object of his visit.

He then, according to the established usage on such occasions, interrogated each of the nuns privately, on the state of discipline in the monastery ; after which, he again sent a polite message to Madame d'Etrées, to request her to meet him in the assembled chapter.

This she absolutely, and in the most unqualified terms, refused to do.

After reiterated expostulations, all of which were in vain, the abbot sent her his official mandate, as General of the order, instantly to appear, in compliance with his citation, as abbess of the monastery of Maubuisson.

This mandate she contemned, in the same manner as the rest.

Nothing more remained to be done. The abbot concluded his visit, drew up his report, and de-

parted to Paris, where he gave a full account of his unsuccessful visit, to the lady's relatives, informing them politely of the necessity reluctantly imposed upon him, of having immediate recourse to compulsory measures. He then laid the whole affair before the king : submitting to his Majesty that the only method which remained was, to expel the abbess who opposed the reform, and introduce a superior of a different description. Accordingly, the abbot of Citeaux obtained a commission to arrest Madame d'Etrées, and to put her under confinement, in the convent of the Filles Penitentes de St. Marie, at Paris.

Accordingly, M. de Citeaux and his suite, accompanied by the Provost of the Maréchaussée, and a numerous company of archers, arrived at Maubuisson on the third of February, 1618. Even in this last visit, M. de Citeaux did not depart from his accustomed lenity and humanity. On his arrival, he at first drove up to the gates, unaccompanied by any of the civil power, and again requested the abbess to come down to speak to him. On her obstinate refusal, he still redoubled his solicitations ; nay, so great was the meekness and moderation of this truly christian prelate, that he delayed, for the space of two whole days, making any use of the armed escort he had brought. During the whole of this time, he reiterated the most earnest expostulations, and used every persuasive which could be suggested, to induce her to submit ; and, by voluntarily quitting the convent, to avoid the disgrace of a

legal arrest. But, after waiting a considerable time, and finding all his efforts vain, he was at length compelled to have recourse to the secular arm.

Admittance being refused to the prelate and his escort, and the gates being barred against them, they were forcibly burst open, in order to seize the abbess. This lady, who was not risen, hearing an unusual noise, and suspecting the cause of the commotion, had jumped out of bed, and without waiting to put on her clothes, ran to conceal herself.

Almost the whole day was spent in making a search for her. At last she was discovered, shivering, and half frozen with cold ; when she was carried into her bed again, to recover herself before she set out. But as she still put off rising from hour to hour, on various pretexts, the provost, after waiting till the middle of next day, ordered four of his archers to take her up on her mattrass, wrapped in blankets as she lay, and to put her and her bed in the carriage which was waiting.

He then conducted her with an armed escort to the place of her exile.

The expedition being concluded, and the abbess safely deposited in the hands of the civil officers, the General assembled the community, and declared to the nuns, that he was about to establish a thorough reform in the monastery ; and, with that view, that he should place over them a vicerent, whom they should obey as their abbess, until the nomination of a new superior.

He then went to Port Royal, to acquaint the M. Angélique with his design, and to give her his official commission to undertake the reform, and the temporary superiority of the monastery of Maubuisson.

Although the M. Angélique accepted, with perfect submission, the irksome and unthankful task thus unexpectedly imposed upon her ; she left her prioress to govern in her absence ; established her sister, the Mère Agnès, sub-prioress ; and selected three nuns to take with her to Maubuisson, and to assist her in establishing the reform.

The abbot of Citeaux, who continued at Port Royal, in order himself to conduct the M. Angélique and her companions to their new habitation, witnessed the sincere grief which her departure occasioned amongst her own community, and the tears which were shed by all those who had been under her direction.

M. de Citeaux first conducted Madame de Port Royal for a week to her father's house, whilst he himself went to Maubuisson, in order to dispose the nuns to receive their new superior, which they were most extremely reluctant to do, as soon as they were informed who she was.

The General and the Mère Angélique happened to arrive at Maubuisson, during the time when the nuns were in the choir reciting the office. The indecent precipitation with which it was hurried over, was a very sufficient specimen to their new superior of what she had to expect in this house so unworthy the name of a monastery.

Service being over, and the doors of inclosure being opened, the abbot entered with the M. Angélique, and presented her to the whole assembled community. They received her respectfully, but with the utmost coldness.

The M. Angélique, on the other hand, whose childhood had been spent in the monastery of Maubuisson, met them with the utmost frankness and cordiality, embracing several of them whom she recognized as being amongst her former companions.

It will now be necessary to present the reader with a brief sketch of the state in which the M. Angélique found the monastery of Maubuisson, at the time she assumed its direction.

The community consisted of two and twenty nuns, almost all of whom might be said to be destitute of every distinction which should mark the members of a religious order, excepting dress.

Most of them, indeed, had embraced a monastic life, contrary to their inclinations.

Their ignorance was gross indeed. They were scarcely acquainted with the first rudiments of christianity.

And the Bernadine monk, whose negligence awfully profaned the sacred and holy office of their confessor, took not the least pains to give them any instruction. He contented himself with hearing whatever they pleased to tell him, or indeed suggesting their confession himself, by repeating a list of sins, and urging them to say yes or no, to each. Nay such was the grievous state of irre-

ligion in this unholy community, and to so fearful a length did their blasphemous profanation extend, and their irreverence for the most sacred institutions of their religion, that they at length imagined the expedient of drawing up three or four protocols of confession, which, when they could no longer defer attending the confessional, they mutually lent each other.

The sacred offices of divine service were performed with the most indecent negligence, indevotion, and precipitation ; to afford more space for the vain and dissipated amusements in which they consumed the whole of those lives, they had solemnly vowed exclusively to dedicate to the service of God.

Their hours were mostly spent in diversions of a frivolous nature, with secular company, who had at all times free access to this degraded community.

Cards, games of chance, and theatrical performances, were amongst their most usual amusements. Frequently they gave entertainments, and parties not always of the most select society, in the spacious arbors of the magnificent gardens belonging to the monastery, and often their abbess took her whole community to walk on the terrace of the lakes which supplied them with fish, and which are situated near the high road from Maubuisson to Paris. Here they were met by the monks of the abbey of St. Martin of Pontoise, a monastery apparently no better regulated than their own, when they openly and unblushingly spent the summer evenings in dancing on the grass-plat of the terrace.

The pious historian of Port Royal mentions these disorders but as the beginning of their excesses. Perhaps there can be no greater proof of the inconsistency of frivolous amusement with genuine christianity, than observing how scandalous and shocking those very things appear to us in persons devoted to God, by the vow of a religious order, which we think nothing of amongst our protestant friends, who are yet bound by an equally awful vow, and an equally solemn sanction, to renounce the vanities as well as the pomps of this world.

Such was the scene of disorder which awaited the pious abbess of Port Royal.

Undismayed, though fully sensible of the difficulties she was about to encounter, she armed herself with a holy courage, resolved to go on in the strength of her Lord. Nor were her three excellent companions less penetrated with the same feelings. The M. Angélique did not indeed attempt either to conceal from herself, or to dissemble with them the arduous nature of the task to which they were called. “My dear sisters,” said she, “it may be necessary, and very probably necessary, that not only our health, but our lives should be sacrificed, in order to the accomplishment of this work ; but the work is a work of God.” Perhaps she recollected the speech of M. de St. Cyran to a timid disciple, who was advised to abandon a known duty on account of his health. “Sir, it is necessary we should do the will of God ; but it is not necessary that we should live.”

The words, however, of the excellent M. Angélique, proved at once both an exhortation, and, as the event shewed, a prophecy. An exemplary reform, indeed, was established at Maubuisson ; but their abbess's exhortation was literally obeyed ; and she, and her three excellent companions, endured such extremity of hardship and persecution, and spared themselves so little, that one of them, the sister Marie Claire Arnauld, sister of M. Angélique, entirely ruined her constitution ; and though she survived her visit to Maubuisson near twenty-eight years, she never enjoyed two days' health, till her spirit returned rejoicing to her Saviour. The trial of faith of one of her other companions was less prolonged. She was called from good works to her reward, and died almost immediately on her return to Port Royal.

The first step of the M. Angélique's reformation was the exclusion of all worldly company, and the strict re-establishment of the rules of enclosure. She was, however, soon convinced, that it would be utterly impossible to effect any permanent or solid reformation, without forming a company of new nuns, whose members should be adequate both to set an example, and to restrain the licence of the old ones. She therefore obtained permission to receive novices. The fame of the M. Angélique, and the celebrity of the reform of Port Royal, had been very widely diffused ; and hence an immense number of applications for admission crowded in upon her from every quarter.

From amongst eighty persons who presented themselves as postulants, the M. Angélique selected thirty, whom, after a rigorous trial, she judged to possess a solid vocation.

The chief attention of the M. Angélique and her three companions was now devoted to inform the minds, enlighten the consciences, and form the habits of these novices.

Thus, in addition to the whole and sole charge of the vast temporal and spiritual concerns of the immense and rich abbey of Maubuisson, she labored with incredible assiduity, in herself instructing the novices. In this arduous post, her capacious mind not only traced an enlightened plan of reform, in the regulation of her monastery, and the administration of justice in the sphere of its external jurisdiction ; but the most minute details did not escape her vigilant attention and sagacious eye.

She not only labored incessantly in the religious instruction of the novices, but her care and her personal exertions extended themselves to every particular of the monastic observances.

She even frequently assisted in teaching them the proper mode of recitation of the service, that it might be performed in a proper and devotional manner. Nay, she even imposed upon herself the restraint of dining and spending a great part of every day in the noviciate, on purpose to inspect their whole behaviour and progress.

Accordingly the monastery of Maubuisson soon assumed an entirely new character, and exhibited a totally different appearance.

The solemn and devotional performance of the offices of the choir ; a liturgic chant, supported by voices clear and distinct, yet sweet and grave ; an uniform habit of laborious industry ; a strict economy and self-denial ; and a noble generosity and extensive charity, were soon established by the M. Angélique in this little family, whose exertions she animated by her own zeal, and by giving them an example in the performance even of the most servile and laborious offices.


Instead of installing herself in the vast and elegant apartments of the abbess, the M. Angélique appropriated them as an infirmary, and selected for herself precisely the most incommodious and the smallest cell in the whole house.

Nay, her labors even extended so far, as to set an example to the lay-sisters ; being often the first to sweep the passages, carry in the fire-wood, wash the dishes, or weed the gardens, &c.

Whilst the M. Angélique cheerfully assisted in all these laborious offices herself, she alike inspired her little family by her zeal, and softened the rigor of their labors by words of comfort and edification.

Thus was the outward face of the monastery gradually changed, and the services requisite to this immense establishment were performed regularly, without noise, hurry, or distraction.

Even the ancient nuns, who were the original inhabitants of Maubuisson, began by degrees to admire and reverence, and even to love their new superior, and the little community, which they at




first beheld growing up around her, with jealous eyes.

Indeed the kind manners of the M. Angélique had greatly contributed to win them over; she showed them every sort of attention and kindness, and not only always behaved to them in the most respectful manner herself, but insisted on their being treated with marked deference and respect by the whole of her little community.

She likewise ordered them to be served in every thing, and obeyed with the utmost punctuality, to the most minute particular, not inconsistent with the rules of the house. This indeed was sometimes not a little difficult, as the old nuns seemed at first inclined purposely to try to the utmost the patience of their new superior and her little company.

They soon however perceived that the M. Angélique on all occasions, excepting where her duty was concerned, was willing to deny herself whenever it could be the means of affording them any comfort. Nor did they fail to observe, that in the midst of all her arduous cares, she always found time to pay a visit every evening to one of the old nuns who was blind, and to stay with her during the time of the evening collation, to cheer and console her by innocently amusing or edifying conversation.


Her kind manners and friendly attentions began gradually to dissipate the prejudices entertained by the nuns, not only against herself, but against the reform. The piety, recollection, heavenly



mindfulness, and humble modesty of her three companions, produced a deep impression in their minds, and filled them with sincere admiration and esteem. Those amongst the nuns of Maubuisson, who were well disposed, began to entertain the most friendly sentiments towards their new inmates. They seemed never tired with contemplating them; their christian demeanour, their guarded yet kind manners, the heavenly expression of their countenances, and the very inflexions of their voice, seemed wholly new to them. They had never beheld any thing, in any degree similar; and their new companions appeared to them as inhabitants of a distinct world. Nay, those amongst the old nuns of Maubuisson, who would not confess themselves so quickly won over, were frequently seen stopping, as they passed the Port Royal nuns, in the course of their daily avocations, and turning round to look after them, and to contemplate them at leisure; so new and so delightful did their heavenly deportment appear.

Such was the reform established by these young, but devoted christians, whose abbess, though several years older than themselves, was yet not at that time quite seven and twenty.

In the course of some months, with the exception of a very few amongst the oldest associates of Madame d'Etrées, who yielded, however, a decent external conformity, the whole became disposed very cordially to enter into the views of the abbess of Port Royal.



Indeed, long before the arrival of the M. Angélique, two or three nuns amongst the community of Maubuisson, had always been distinguished by the respectability of their conduct. They had, indeed, no distinct religious views, and were totally devoid of instruction ; but they were sincere in their obedience to the light they had ; they endeavoured conscientiously to discharge their outward duties, and they most sincerely mourned over the scandalous disorders which disgraced their monastery ; and though they had neither the capacity nor the authority necessary to effect a reformation, they had long done all that lay in their power to stem the torrent of iniquity.

Amongst other examples on record, one instance is too honorable to remain wholly unnoticed, even in this brief sketch.

The ancient prioress of Maubuisson, was a lady of the house of Cleri ; she had indeed but little religious instruction, and still less religious vocation : but, finding herself engaged in the sacred obligation of monastic vows, she endeavoured conscientiously to discharge her duty, by a punctual observance of the rules of her house ; nor did she ever swerve from it, although she stood alone in a monastery, where her abbess, and the whole community, discountenanced all that was good.

Discreet, disinterested, and conscientious ; she used all her efforts to maintain union in her distracted community ; and to preserve the morals of its degraded inhabitants.

She saw with deep sorrow, that the doors of the abbatial side of the house, were constantly open ; and, that the very apartment of their superior, was a continual place of resort of a profligate court. The celebrated Gabrielle d'Etrées lived with her sister the abbess, and both were equally involved in scenes of dissipation too painful to dwell on.

Under this apparently remediless evil, the good prioress resolved not to remit her efforts, however unavailing. Destitute of the religious authority necessary to oppose her abbess, destitute of clear light to exhort her sisters, she always maintained the most respectable and prudent conduct herself ; and always kept possession of the key of enclosure next the cloister, which she carefully locked herself ; and, by the sincerity of her intentions, and the uprightness of her demeanour, she gained over two or three of the nuns, who united with her in resisting the torrent of iniquity.

This truly respectable nun, was in a state of constant solicitude, because the king, Henry the Fourth, was perpetually spending his time in the monastery, with all the most dissipated young noblemen of his court ; nor did either the king, his retinue, or the abbess, Madame d'Etrées, leave any means untried, to allure the community into their society and dissipations.

For a long while the vigilance of the prioress effectually baffled their endeavours.


At length, after having for a long while watched for an opportunity in vain, and notwithstanding

all the vigilance of Madame Cleri, and her faithful nuns, the king suddenly arrived with a numerous retinue and armed escort, at the hour when he was least expected ; just after complin, as the nuns were retiring from church. He immediately sent one of his courtiers, and bade him rush to the gate of the cloister, and endeavour to enter by force or artifice, before it could be closed.

The nobleman had reached the gate, just as the sister Ambrosia, one of the confidential nuns, was shutting it ; he pushed it open with so much violence, as to throw her down ; then rushing past, he seized the first nun he met in the passage, and dragged her by force towards the great hall, where was the king.

The good sister Ambrosia flew to inform her of what was passing ; on which the prioress, without a moment's hesitation, and only accompanied by her two faithful nuns, hastened into the royal hall, where the king, surrounded by all the young nobility of his court, was banqueting with the abbess, and Mademoiselle Gabrielle.

Without stopping to salute the king, or trembling at the armed escort who lined the hall ; the prioress peremptorily commanded her two companions instantly to seize, and carry off the nun ; which, being done, she turned to the astonished king, and with an intrepid eye and firm voice, thus addressed him : “ Do you not blush, Sire, to be thus ungratefully profaning the temples of that God, whose arm has so signally conducted




you through unparalleled difficulties, and who only seated you upon the throne, that your majesty might be the example of the court, and the guardian of the morals of your nation ?”

The whole assembly were for an instant silent with astonishment ; then the king arose, and most respectfully reconducting the virtuous nun to the door of the enclosure, he immediately withdrew with all his riotous companions.

Meanwhile the prayers and tears of Madame de Cleri, were not lost : her conscientious obedience to the light she had, ascended as a memorial before God : and though many years intervened, yet when the Mère Angélique and her nuns did arrive, they were hailed by Madame de Cleri,^a and her faithful companions, as messengers from

^a This excellent nun became under the M. M. Angélique and Suireau des Anges, a most exemplary and devoted christian. She lived to a very advanced age, and her sight became much affected, notwithstanding which, when she was past eighty, she was to be seen every morning at matins, reading her Homily, by the light of four large wax tapers, which four novices held near her for that purpose. God, whom she had so faithfully served, according to her degree of light, bestowed upon her the blessing of a most happy and edifying death. Her last illness continued eight days, during which she enjoyed great peace. Her joy increased as she approached death. Beginning to be in the agony of death, she asked the M. Suireau des Anges, who never left her. to send in for the nuns to sing the creed with her, that she might joyfully declare her profession of faith. This was done, the sisters standing in two rows, and singing antiphonally. She then recounted the mercies of her life, how it had pleased God to answer her prayers, and lead her from darkness into his mar-



heaven. Thus, even in the degraded and iniquitous abbey of Maubuisson, though encompassed by vice without, and tried by darkness and ignorance within, we see that where two or three faithful, though uninstructed servants of God, were gathered together, in the name of Christ; he condescended to be indeed in the midst of them, and did not fail to answer their prayer, to deliver, and to bless them.

The reformation having been happily effected in this monastery, month after month passed away, with every prospect of increasing peace and tranquillity. The community of Maubuisson became daily more reconciled to the change; the novices increased in piety, and abounded more and more in good works. And the M. Angélique and her companions, finding their labour become lighter every day, began to promise themselves soon to reap an abundant harvest; when a totally unexpected event frustrated all their expectations.

Madame d'Etrées, whom the reader will recollect, we left under the protection of the Filles Penitentes de St. Marie, contrived on the 10th of

vellous light. She then said, with extraordinary joy, "We must praise God, I much wish the *Te Deum* to be sung." Instantly the Abbess des Anges ordered it to be done. The precentress began, and the whole choir followed. As they sung the very words, "In te, Domine, speravi, non confundar in æternum," the good mother breathed her last, in a joy and peace which passes all understanding. *Voyez Vie de Suyreau des Anges*, pp. 58, 59. Also, *Besogne*, tom. i. pp. 234, 235. Also, *Dom Clemencet*, tom. iii. p. 28.

September, 1619, to escape from her exile. This she effected by the assistance of her brother-in-law, the Count de Sanzé, and a company of young men of his acquaintance, who had been in the habit, as it was before observed, of loitering away most of their time at the abbey.

She arrived at Maubuisson, at six o'clock in the morning, with a numerous escort, all strongly armed. The porter of the outer gate having refused them admittance, the Count de Sanzé and his party, instantly burst it open; and, after severely beating, and otherwise ill using the servant, they proceeded with Madame d'Etrées directly to the church. The nave of enclosure, which separates the door common to the parish congregation, from the internal choir appropriated to the nuns, would, she knew, be opened to her by the Mère de la Serre, one of the ancient community of Maubuisson, who had been formerly associated with her in all her scandalous excesses. This nun had secretly kept up a constant correspondence with Madame d'Etrées; and had contrived to obtain a false key for the purpose.

Accordingly, she found the nun waiting at the appointed door, which was immediately opened for her admittance.

The first person Madame d'Etrées happened to meet, was the M. Angélique herself. She did not betray the least embarrassment, or even surprise, at so totally unexpected a rencounter. Her calmness rather disconcerted Madame de Maubuisson, who said to her, with considerable emo-

tion, “ You, Madame de Port Royal, have for a sufficient length of time usurped the place which belongs only to me ; being now returned to my own house, you will see the necessity for your immediate departure.”

“ Madame,” replied the M. Angélique, with perfect calmness, but with respect, “ I am perfectly ready to quit this house, as soon as our common superiors allow me my dismissal.” She then herself conducted Madame d’Etrées to the abbess’s lodge ; the apartments of which in this royal establishment, were unusually spacious and magnificent ; and which, during the superiority of Madame d’Etrées, had been furnished very expensively, and with peculiar taste and elegance. Instead of the sumptuous decorations with which it had been formerly adorned, she found it furnished in the plainest manner ; and the most spacious apartments having been converted into an infirmary, there happened to be two nuns in one of them, who had been exceedingly ill, and who, having that day taken medicine, were then confined to their beds.

Madame d’Etrées could no longer contain her indignation ; but turning from her former friends, with an air of loathing and contempt, she disdainfully said to the M. Angélique, who accompanied her, “ I desire these filthy and disgusting creatures may be instantly taken away ; and that I may be no longer exposed to such an offensive sight !” “ Madame,” replied the M. Angélique, coolly, “ if this apartment is not in a proper con-


dition to receive a lady abbess, I trust you will consider it an excusable circumstance, since the honor of your ladyship's company was wholly unexpected."

The abbess, however, chose to remain in her own apartment, where the M. Angélique left her, to arrange and lock up her papers ; after which she went down herself into the kitchen, to order Madame d'Etrées a proper dinner, and suitable attendance.

She gave directions to the nuns as to every particular, that Madame d'Etrées might be served with the dignity belonging to her rank and office, and that every thing might be done without trouble or confusion.

It was then service time. In honor of the abbess's return, high mass was solemnly chanted. When it was over, Madame d'Etrées went all over the house, visiting every nun in particular, and endeavouring, by every persuasion in her power, to gain over those of the old community to join her party. With a very few she succeeded ; but most of them would not even listen to her, being already sincerely attached to the M. Angélique.

Madame d'Etrées having asked two of them for the set of keys belonging to the house, they answered, " that they had delivered up the keys into the hands of Madame de Port Royal." The word 'Madame,' grievously offended the abbess, who indignantly exclaimed, " Madame! there is in this house no Madame but myself."



Dinner hour being arrived, a very handsome dinner was served to Madame d'Etrées, in the abbess's apartment ; whilst the M. Angélique went as usual into the refectory, to dine with the nuns. Before she sat down to table, she briefly informed them of what was passing, and exhorted them to be prepared to encounter some fatigue before the day was over.

After dinner, the Bernardine monk, who had so negligently filled his office of confessor, under Madame d'Etrées, sent to request an audience of the M. Angélique in the parlour. His object was, to endeavour by gentle means to persuade her to withdraw. To persuasions succeeded threats of the vengeance of the Count de Sanzé ; but finding all in vain, Madame de Maubuisson joined her expostulations ; she concluded by saying, " that she hoped Madame de Port Royal would rather take her departure quietly, than provoke them to resort to measures of violence ; the bounds of which she might not be able to control.

The M. Angélique answered, " that being a nun, she was bound by her vows of enclosure ; and that therefore nothing short of the authority of her superiors, or of foreign force, could compel her to quit the house where they had placed her."

Madame d'Etrées seeing the day wear away, and that nothing was to be gained ; resolved to expel her from the monastery, by artifice or violence.

She therefore assumed a cordial manner, and proposed to Madame de Port Royal, that they should all go together to the church.

The little band of the M. Angélique accompanied their spiritual mother, and having entered the church the whole of this pious company knelt down, to recommend themselves to God, under the strange predicament in which they were then circumstanced.

Then Madame d'Etrées, spying her opportunity, whispered to the ancient nuns of Maubuisson, to seize the M. Angélique, and thrust her out by force through the door of enclosure ; but they, not chusing to take any part in the business, she, with her own hands endeavoured to drag the M. Angélique from the place where she was kneeling, close to the door of the choir, which opens into the external church : at the same time screaming out for help, as though she had been herself attacked. At this concerted signal, Madame de la Serre instantly opened the external door with her false key, and the Count de Sanzé and all his company, rushed in with drawn swords ; shouting and brandishing their glittering blades around the head of the abbess, who, still kneeling, preserved a calm and placid countenance. The Count de Sanzé enraged, then put his pistol to her breast ; and one of his companions actually fired one, in order to frighten the M. Angélique ; and to induce her in her panic, to pass of her own accord, through the open door ; which seemed her only escape, as they surrounded her, and crowded in upon her with drawn weapons, in every other direction.

But all these artifices leaving the abbess in the most perfect tranquillity, and her countenance not

betraying the least emotion ; Madame d'Etrées, the Count de Sanzé, the Bernadine confessor, and the young men, seized her by force, and thrust her out of the monastery.

Madame d'Etrées was very anxious to have turned her out alone, and to retain all the nuns ; but in this attempt she was foiled, for the whole company seeing their Mother about to be thrust out, instantly rose from their knees, with several of the original community of Maubuisson, and rushed in a crowd after her towards the open door : so that although Madame d'Etrées closed it as quickly as she possibly could, above thirty persons had made their escape and joined the M. Angélique.

Two of the M. Angélique's nuns did not go out with her. One of them, a postulant, chanced to be occupied at the time in the dairy, which was a very large one, and of which she had the superintendence. It was situated under ground, owing to which she heard nothing of the scene of confusion and uproar above. In the evening, her work being done, she returned up stairs. Her amazement was indescribable, at beholding herself in the midst of a company of strangers, and at seeing, as she anxiously looked round, nothing but faces wholly unknown to her.

When the business was fully explained to her, she requested to quit the house, and on Madame d'Etrées's peremptory refusal, she replied firmly : “ Madame, you will have the goodness to recollect that I am not one of the former nuns of Maubuisson. I am not therefore your nun, nor are you my

abbess ; if I am detained after the departure of my abbess, it will be a false imprisonment, not a monastic enclosure. I advise you, Madame, to consider the consequences of such a detention : I demand an instant liberation." Madame d'Etrées instantly opened the door to her.

The M. Angélique, finding herself thus unexpectedly destitute of house and home, collected the whole of her little company, and kneeling down in the open air, besought the Lord, whose cause had brought them there, to direct their steps and to provide for them.

They then rose up, and the M. Angélique arranging them two and two, as in a solemn procession, they began slowly to walk towards the town of Pontoise. The postulants walked first, then the novices ; to them succeeded the original nuns of Maubuisson, and lastly of all, the nuns of Port Royal and herself. In this manner they entered the town, walking two and two in profound silence, with their great veils let down, their eyes cast down upon the earth, and their hands joined in prayer. The inhabitants of the town, meanwhile, could not imagine the meaning of this unusual procession.

Some supposed it must be a religious ceremony ; others thought, perhaps, it was some new community of nuns about to be established in their town ; others however, who recognised the dress of the order, and who well knew the character of Madame de Maubuisson, had some shrewd suspicions of what had actually happened.

The whole town was soon collected ; and all were in admiration of the modesty, devotion, and holy tranquillity of their demeanour.


The M. Angélique conducted her daughters to the first church which they met with, which happened to be that of the Jesuits. There, the Grand Vicaire of Pontoise, and Dr. Duval, who entertained a high respect for her, came to deliberate with the M. Angélique, on the steps proper to be taken under so unprecedented a conjuncture.

The news quickly circulated throughout Pontoise and its whole neighbourhood. The Carmelites, Ursulines, and almost every other religious establishment, or private gentleman's house, offered an asylum to this peripatetic community.

It was at length decided they should take possession of the grand Vicariat ; which the grand Vicaire and the Doctor had the hospitality to cede to the M. Angélique, until tranquillity should be again restored in the abbey of Maubuisson.

Before the nuns quitted the church, they said vespers together ; after which they set out in procession as before, to take possession of their temporary abode. The whole town flocked together to behold so edifying and unusual a spectacle.

The people all stood with their hats off, and the crowds opened to let them pass, gazing upon them in silence, and many knelt out of respect ; and seeing the nuns walk with clasped hands, sympathetically united with them in prayer.



On reaching the Grand Vicariat, they found the kindness of the inhabitants already occupied in anticipating every want.

Beds, fire wood, kitchen utensils, food, money ; every thing in short which could possibly be of any use to them, poured in with a profuse abundance on every side ; so that in the course of a few hours, the community appeared completely established ; and the next day, they were found proceeding with the same regularity and tranquillity as if nothing unusual had happened.

The abode of the M. Angélique and her nuns was not however of long duration. The porter of the monastery of Maubuisson, whom the Count de Sanzé had so cruelly beaten, made the best of his way on foot to Paris : where he immediately went to M. Arnauld's family, and gave them full information of the whole business.

M. de Citeaux did not continue long unapprised of what had passed ; so that, a warrant being obtained next morning, before evening the civil officers arrived at Maubuisson, with a company of two hundred and fifty archers.

Madame d'Etrées, who suspected the consequences of her unadvised measures, had taken the precaution of posting centinels on the various roads, to watch, and give her intelligence if any of the civil power made their appearance.

She was soon informed, that an unusual cloud of dust and glittering of arms were seen through the trees on the road to Paris. Madame d'Etrées, without waiting for further particulars, fled in dis-

guise through a concealed door, she had taken the precaution to open on purpose ; accompanied by the Count de Sanzé, and all the young gentlemen who had escorted him, and who had remained in the monastery ever since. As for the confessor, Dom Sabathier, who by some accident did not receive the intelligence so early, he was obliged to climb up the high garden wall, and leaping down at the risk of his neck, and taking to his heels, only just effected his escape in time. The whole party then fled to some of their friends, where they remained concealed for several weeks.

The Mère de la Serre, who had been the chief instrument in this scandalous scene, was less fortunate. Not having time to escape, she concealed herself in a hiding place, which during a period of civil war, had been very artfully contrived through the ceiling of one of the cells of the monastery.

The access was entirely concealed by a tapestry hanging, which fell over it ; and even were it discovered, it could only be reached by a ladder. The cell through which was this lurking hole, was then in the possession of one of the refractory nuns. Madame de la Serre withdrew there, taking with her a supply of food.

The archers, having, as they imagined, searched the whole house, without finding any thing, after establishing a guard of a hundred men, went to Pontoise. When their commander waited on the M. Angélique, and very politely told her, that his

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Majesty, anxious for the prosperity of so considerable an establishment as Maubuisson, was very desirous that she should immediately take again the government of that house.

It was by this time ten o'clock at night, and as no time was to be lost, the M. Angélique disposed herself immediately to set out. All the ecclesiastics of the town chose to shew them the respect of accompanying them as far as the gates of the monastery. They all set out; the ecclesiastics first, and then the nuns, walking two and two, and forming a long procession, between a double file of archers, mounted and carrying each a lighted flambeau. Meanwhile, almost every inhabitant of the town or neighbourhood hurried to behold the ceremony; and notwithstanding the lateness of the hour, night seemed almost converted into day, by the blaze of the hundreds of flambeaux and torches assembled on every side by the multitude of people who poured in from all quarters.

Thus did the nuns arrive at the abbey. The night was chiefly spent in watching on the part of the archers; and in providing for their refreshment, on that of the nuns. Towards morning, the centinel, who was posted at the door of the empty dormitory, hearing some one moving softly, and as though treading with caution, gave information to the officers; when, after a long search, the hiding place of Madame de la Serre was discovered. This lady, whose appearance and manners the M. Angélique describes as rather resembling a trooper than a nun, at first not only refused to quit her

lurking hole, but began to insult the archers in the most opprobrious terms ; well knowing they could not place a ladder so as to climb up safely, unless she chose to let it remain there. One of the archers seeing this, applied the muzzle of his firelock to the door, and threatened to fire instantly, unless she surrendered herself; which she then did. She was then seized, and transferred to another convent.

The archers still remained six whole months in the neighbourhood of Maubuisson ; lest Madame d'Etrées, whose retreat was unknown, should meditate a second enterprize.

This precaution proved not unnecessary, as the Count de Sanzé and his companions continually lurked about the premises, and either singly, or sometimes in small parties, both by night and day, not only insulted and ill used the workmen and laborers who were employed there, but continually fired in at the windows, particularly those of the M. Angélique.

The guard which the government had provided, was, however, very painful to this excellent abbess. She did not like to see a religious house surrounded by an armed force ; often saying, “ What can be expected from seculars, if religious persons, at least, do not shew that their confidence is in the Lord and in the power of his might ? ”

On her reiterated representations, the archers were, at length, withdrawn. Very soon after, Madame d'Etrées being discovered, and shut up anew with the Filles Penitentes, all hostilities

ceased ; and the M. Angélique was left in tranquillity to prosecute her work at Maubuisson. She stayed there five years.

The christian reader will be pleased to learn, that, many years after, Madame de la Serre became, by the example of the Port Royal nuns, a truly converted character. Her haughty spirit was humbled ; the fierceness of her nature was turned into the gentleness of the lamb ; and, after a dark and stormy day, her evening sun set with a bright and peaceful light ; and her name, though at the eleventh hour, was enrolled amongst the worthies of Port Royal.

We cannot speak with the same assurance of Madame d'Etrées. She sunk from degradation to degradation, till she was at length transferred from the convent of St. Marie to the prisons of the Chatelet. The last certain intelligence we have concerning her, is that of a venerable religious, who went to pay her a charitable visit, in hopes of leading her to repentance.- He found her stretched on a sorry mattrass, in a state of the most squalid misery and disorder, and drinking costly wines, in which, as well as in litigation, she spent the very handsome income which was settled upon her, from the revenues of Maubuisson, at the solicitations of the Port Royal abbess. The kindly intended visit of the pious religious, she rejected with scorn. No more is certainly known of this unhappy woman ; but, about twenty years after, at the time of her death, the casket wherein she used to keep her papers, her jewels, and all her

most precious and important effects, being brought to Maubuisson, the Mère Suireau des Anges, then abbess, was equally astonished and touched, to find all these things gone, and replaced by a New Testament and a Thomas à Kempis, neatly papered, and marked in a variety of passages, as though they had been constantly read and meditated.

Such is a very abridged account of the difficulties the M. Angélique had to encounter at the monastery of Maubuisson. They are indeed slight in comparison of many she afterwards had to endure from the nuns of the monastery of Tard.

They are, however, sufficient to shew, not only that he who will serve the Lord, must prepare his soul for temptation; but that to those who order their way aright, and trust in him, their reward shall not fail.

In every one of the monasteries, however, a solid reform was, at length, effectually established. Both the nuns and abbesses considered their visitors from Port Royal, as angels descended from heaven. The M. Angélique became a blessing, not only to her own abbey, but to the whole order of Citeaux.

CHAP. III.

. *Port Royal de Paris.—Recluses.—Schools.*

MEANWHILE the celebrity of Port Royal had occasioned a prodigious increase in the number of its inhabitants. Thirty nuns of Maubuisson besought the M. Angélique to allow them to return with her, after her visit to their convent: besides which, a great many ladies from every part of France were continually applying for admittance. This rapid increase began to be a serious inconvenience.

The abbey had been originally destined for twelve nuns. It was now inhabited by eighty.

It ought to have been observed, that the monastery was situated in a deep and thickly wooded valley, watered by two extensive lakes. For want of being properly drained, they had spread in one continued marsh over the whole vale. The vicinity of the wood increased the evil. The situation became exceedingly damp and unhealthy. The whole monastery was continually enveloped in a thick fog. The situation was rendered still more noxious by the want of proper accommodation for so large a family.

The house, at length, became a complete infirmary. Deaths continually succeeded each other;

yet numbers of fresh postulants were perpetually offering.

In this difficulty, Providence did not abandon the M. Angélique. A resource was offered by her own family. Her mother, Madame Arnauld, was a lady of very considerable affluence. She was daughter to the celebrated M. Marion, advocate-general. This lady had been the mother of twenty children. Ten had died in their youth ; the others were amply and honorably provided for. She was herself, at this period, left a widow, with a very considerable fortune at her own disposal.

There happened, at this very juncture, to be a noble house, with magnificent gardens, offered for sale at Paris.

It was situated in the Fauxbourg St. Jacques, and was called the hotel Clagny. This house Madame Arnauld purchased at a very considerable expense, and presented to her daughter. It was soon prepared for the reception of the community. A church was added to it by one of the first architects, and the interior was properly fitted up.

The permission of the Archbishop of Paris was obtained, and the whole community was transferred to this new habitation. A chaplain only was left at Port Royal, to supply the parish church, and to take care of the house.

Both these monasteries were considered as forming one abbey ; but, thenceforward, they were distinguished by the appellations of “ Port Royal de Paris, and Port Royal des Champs.”

Now, La Maternité.



The removal of the nuns took place in 1625.

The M. Angélique seeing her reformation so thoroughly effected, began to consider the best mode of giving it solidity and permanence. She at length obtained a royal grant, declaring that the abbess, instead of being appointed for life by the king, should be elected triennially by the nuns. In 1630, the M. Angélique and the M. Agnés resigned their offices, and restored the monastery to a free election. They were, however, very frequently appointed abbesses afterwards.

It has been mentioned, that the M. Angélique had nine brothers and sisters living. Six of her sisters were nuns at Port Royal. Her brothers all filled distinguished posts, in a manner most honorable to their reputation.

Her eldest brother, M. Arnauld d'Andilly, occupied the office of commissary general to the army. His duties obliged him to an almost continual attendance at court. The great integrity and fidelity for which he was distinguished, procured him universal respect; and his amiable disposition rendered him exceedingly beloved. The queen particularly honored him with the highest esteem. But, above all, he was remarked for his deep piety, so that, whilst yet in his early years, he was venerated even by courtiers as a saint.

Another of her brothers was M. Henry Arnauld, Bishop of Angers. This gentleman was esteemed one of the most pious prelates in France. He was, at an early age, sent as envoy from the court of France, to that of Rome. His talents and piety

were so highly esteemed there, that medals were struck in his honor, and a statue was erected to him by the noble house of Barbarini. When he became Bishop of Angers, he was so assiduous in performing his pastoral duties, that he never but once in his life quitted his diocese; and that was to convert the Prince of Tarentum, and to reconcile him with the Duke de La Trémouille, his father.

The city of Angers, in opposition to all his efforts, revolted in 1652. The Queen mother was advancing in order to take signal vengeance. The good bishop had been appointed to say mass before the royal army, a few miles from the entrance of the city. The queen, after service, advanced to the altar. “Madame,” said he, giving her the consecrated host, “receive your God—your God who, whilst expiring on the cross, pardoned his enemies!” The city was spared. These merciful maxims were not merely on his lips, but resided in his heart. It was said of him, that the infallible claim to the Bishop of Angers’ good offices was to use him ill.

He was truly the father of the poor and afflicted. His whole time was taken up in prayer, reading, and the affairs of the diocese. A friend fearing that his health might be injured by incessant labor, requested him to set apart one day in every week for rest. “I have no objection,” replied M. d’Angers, “provided you fix on one in which I am not bishop.”

The other brother of the M. Angélique, was the great Arnauld, Dr. of Sorbonne, who was after-

wards so distinguished a champion of Jansenism. He was the last of Madame Arnauld's children, and was twenty years younger than his brother M. d'Andilly. At a very early period he shewed marks of that energy and fire, by which he was subsequently so peculiarly characterized. When only six years old, he was staying with his relation Cardinal Perron. One day after dinner, he was intently occupying himself with pen, ink, and paper, instead of amusing himself with his play-fellows. The cardinal asked him what he was about? "Sir," returned the child, "I am assisting you to refute the Hugonots." Afterwards, when he was admitted as a member of the Sorbonne, instead of the oath ordinarily tendered, he, with great energy, swore, not only to abide by the doctrines of the church, but to defend them to the last drop of his blood.

Whilst at Maubuisson, the M. Angélique had been introduced to the venerable St. Francis de Sales, and, by his means, to the Baroness de Chantal. With both of them she formed a close friendship. She introduced them both, likewise, to all the members of her own family.

This acquaintance wrought a wonderful change in every individual belonging to it. The family of the Arnaulds were not only ancient, noble, and affluent, but they had been noted, during many successive generations, for the great superiority of their talents. They now began to be as much celebrated for exalted piety, as for the lustre of their intellectual endowments. St. Francis went

to his eternal reward when the youngest Arnauld was but a child. Nevertheless, the piety which his instructions had first implanted, progressively increased throughout the whole family.

Such was the state of the Arnauld family when M. de St. Cyran was first introduced to it. His acquaintance began with M. Arnauld d'Andilly.

M. de St. Cyran had just parted with his valued friend Jansenius. M. d'Andilly had lost a most revered spiritual guide in the blessed St. Francis. Under these circumstances, a close friendship was soon cemented between them.

When the M. Angélique came to reside at Port Royal de Paris, the acquaintance was consequently extended, in some measure, to her. She heard much of M. de St. Cyran from her brother. In the course of ten years he also called three or four times. Not, however, being connected by any tie of duty, their acquaintance did not appear likely to make any farther progress.

About the year 1625, the M. Angélique was desired to assist the bishop of Langres in organizing a new institution he had lately founded in honor of the Eucharist. M. de Langres at that period entertained a high esteem for M. de St. Cyran. On being sent for out of Paris, he therefore appointed him as director of his new institution.

By this means originated that friendship which ever after so closely united M. de St. Cyran to Port Royal.

In M. de St. Cyran the M. Angélique seemed again to behold the blessed St. Francis de Sales.

Till then she had mourned his loss as irreparable. She now, for the first time, met with one whose growth in piety was equally extraordinary. Nor could she avoid observing, that, to the eminent holiness which distinguished St. Francis, M. de St. Cyran added a strength of mental powers, a luminous intellect, and an energy of character, peculiarly his own. In these respects, M. de St. Cyran and the M. Angélique were especially congenial. The abbess soon observed, that whilst both these great men seemed to possess a piety equally fervent, that of the latter seemed far the most enlightened.

The effects which these excellent men produced on the Arnauld family, were exactly those which might have been expected from the difference of their characters.

From their intimacy with St. Francis, they had rather received deep religious impressions, than acquired clear religious views. Many years had elapsed since his death, and, at the time of their acquaintance, the younger part of this numerous family were quite children. Hence they had been rather distinguished for warm devotional feelings, a respect for piety, and a horror of immorality, than for that distinct light which enabled them at once to enter upon a religious course of life, and steadily to pursue it.

Their intimacy with M. de St. Cyran exactly supplied that which had before been wanting. He became the means, not only of awakening, but of enlightening their consciences. He clearly pointed

out to them the grand essentials of christian doctrine. From these emanated a clear light, which distinctly shewed the path of christian practice. The pious impressions of this excellent family had lived unquenched amidst the evil contagion of the world. What might not now be expected, when placed under the immediate influence of two such powerful characters as the M. Angélique and the Abbé de St. Cyran?

One of the M. Angélique's nephews, M. le Maître, had, at a very early age, obtained a very high reputation for eloquence. He was esteemed, at five and twenty, the first advocate of the age. All France thronged to hear him plead.

His brother, M. de Sericourt, had obtained much military reputation. They were scarcely thirty, when they suddenly quitted the world, and withdrew into the most profound retirement. Here they mourned with the most unfeigned sorrow over their past sins, and spent their whole time in devotion and in acts of charity. M. Claude Lancelot, and many other young men who were intimate with M. de St. Cyran, became influenced in the same manner, and joined their party.

At the end of a few months they found their house at Paris too small to accommodate their numbers. They determined to go to Port Royal des Champs, and take possession of the monastery the nuns had abandoned about fifteen years before. This occurred in 1638.

At Port Royal des Champs they found every thing bearing marks of the most complete desola-

tion. The lakes, for want of draining, were converted into noxious marshes, overgrown with reeds and other aquatic plants ; they continually exhaled the most pestilential vapours. The grounds were, in many parts, completely overflowed. The gardens were not only overgrown with weeds and brushwood, but the very walks were infested with venomous serpents. The house was in a completely dilapidated and ruinous condition. Great part of it indeed had fallen down.

The hermits were not, however, to be deterred by trivial inconveniences. Many of them were young men of the first families in France, yet they did not disdain to labor with their own hands. The little company joyfully set to work, and the aspect of the valley was soon transformed. The surface of the swampy morass soon exhibited a clear lake, whose waters reflected the hills around, crowned with thick forests of oak. The tangled brush-wood, which choked up the avenues to the house, was felled. The spacious gardens blossomed as the rose ; and the walls of Port Royal arose from the ground, amidst hymns of prayer and shouts of praise.

New associates were continually quitting the world and joining themselves to this little band. After a short period it became a numerous and flourishing society. Regular plans, and an orderly distribution of employments were soon found necessary to the well being of the whole.

The recluses of Port Royal, unlike religious orders, were not bound by any vows. Each, never-

theless, sought to imitate his Lord, and follow his steps, by a life of voluntary poverty, penance, and self-denial. They assumed the dress of no particular order ; yet, they were easily distinguished by their coarse and plain, but clean clothing. Their time was divided between their devotions to God, and their services to men. They all met together several times, both in the day and night, in the church. Twice each day also, the whole company attended the refectory. Some hours were occupied by each in their own cells, in meditation, in private prayer, and in diligently reading and comparing the holy scriptures ; which they always did, in the attitude, as well as in the spirit of prayer ; and to which exercise, they devoted a portion of time every day.

Their directors always advised them “ to begin by studying the holy scripture itself, without any commentary, only seeking for edification.” They were in the habit also of always reading scripture with a reference to parallel passages, without which they conceived it could only be very imperfectly understood. “ They also read the new testament oftener than the old, because they considered the former as the best explanation of the latter. The whole however of scripture they were advised to read, in the spirit of prayer and supplication. “ In short,” continued their venerable director, “ draw continually from this pure source ; the sacred waters have this peculiarity, that they proportion and accommodate themselves to the wants of every one ; a lamb may ford them without fear,

to quench his thirst ; and an elephant may swim there, and find no bottom to their depths." "A bishop of these latter times declared, that he would go to the ends of the world with St. Augustin ; but I would go there with the Bible." "O that I could but impress my heart with a fuller sense of the sacred respect, with which that sacred volume should ever be perused."

But above all, the inhabitants of Port Royal were taught to search the scriptures with a super-eminent view to him of whom they testify. "The true use of the written word," said the same venerable pastor, "is to lead us to the living word, which alone can invigorate and cure our souls, just as the steady contemplation of the brazen serpent could alone cure the wounds inflicted by the fiery serpents." "The more we attach ourselves with singleness of eye, to contemplate Christ upon the cross, and his wounds, which are the cure of ours, the more benefit shall we receive from that divine power, which flows from him to us, in order to bring us back to Him, who is alone our strength and our rest. "Jesus Christ himself must be our light and our strength." "The sufferings of Christ are all our merits and plea ; they are the source of all the mercies and graces we receive ; it is by them only that we become living members of Christ Jesus." Let us then establish the edifice of our salvation on the truth of Christ, which alone is the immutability of the rock, and not upon the shifting and delusive sands of our own thoughts, fears, or frames."

“Our confidence must be firm,” as St. Paul says, because it is grounded on the virtue of the blood of Christ, which is infinite.” “It is faith alone which inspires well grounded confidence. We trust, because Christ himself is our trust ; who teaches us, that our salvation is his glory : and that in saving us, he saves the price of his death, and the fruit of his sufferings.” “The cross of Christ is an abundant and a superabundant source of mercy ; the cross of Christ alone it is which sanctifies, not only the blessed virgin and St. John, but also the penitent thief and Mary Magdalen. The one no longer considered that he was a robber, nor the other that she was a sinner. They only considered those fountains of blood which poured from the body of Jesus Christ, as fully sufficient to drown, as in a holy deluge, the sins of the whole world. There they looked, and looking, found their cure.”

“We indeed are, by the natural creation of Adam, nothing but sin, ingratitude, and pride ; and we see nothing in ourselves but subjects of guilt, condemnation, and remorse. But whatever be the truth of our view of our state by nature, a view of that alone can produce pusillanimity, and lead to despair. But that faith, by a vital reception of which we are christians, and by which we are distinguished from the angels of darkness, after shewing us this ground of corruption and sin, which ought profoundly to humble us, shews us with it the infinite mercy of God, founded upon the blood of Jesus Christ, as mediator and recon-

ciler of men with God, who is thus become our trust and our cure, and in which alone, according to St. Paul, consists the mystery of the christian religion. We must then unite these two views, which ought never to be separated ; the view of ourselves and our sins, and the view of Jesus Christ and of his merits. The first terrifies, the second re-assures. The first deeply humbles, the second elevates, with what St. Austin terms a holy presumption ; the fruit not of pride, but of faith ; and this confidence is firm, because it is humble. It is founded on the entire annihilation of hope from man ; but on the mercy of God, and the efficacy of the blood of Christ, both of which are infinite.”

“ As for myself, I feel that I am poor interiorly ; that I am destitute of every good thing : but, O my God, thou hast undertaken to cure me. God alone can be the physician of the soul. The blood of God alone can be our remedy ; the Spirit of God can alone achieve our cure.”^a

Such were the sentiments of the inhabitants of Port Royal, and such were the sources whence they drew that plenitude of grace which so richly dwelt in their hearts, and which manifested itself in so abundant a diffusion of good works.

^a Saci's Letters, vol. ii. pp. 677 and 678.—The whole included in commas of quotation, is a TRANSLATION from the passages referred to. See six thick 8vo. vols. of Singlin's Instructions to the nuns of Port Royal, on the Scripture of the Day ; and twelve vols. of Tourneaux's Instructions on the same, as specimens of the great anxiety of the Port Royalists, to diffuse Scriptural instruction.

The remainder of their time was taken up in labors of love for their fellow-creatures. Yet, in these was the greatest regularity observed. They did not attempt to do each what was right in his own eyes ; but each filled up that occupation for which it was judged his talents were best fitted. Every one of these recluses was under the direction of M. de St. Cyran. Though he was all this time immured in the dungeon of Vincennes, he maintained a constant correspondence with his friend, M. Singlin. This ecclesiastic, under his immediate direction, guided both the houses of Port Royal. By this means, M. de St. Cyran was acquainted with the character of every individual in each of the houses. Every one of the recluses at Port Royal des Champs, as well as every nun in Port Royal de Paris, was placed in the exact office for which he or she was best qualified. Nor did their unfeigned humility ever permit them to murmur at any appointment, however low. Each one rather esteemed it an honor to be employed in any way for his Lord.


The acts of mercy which occupied the recluses, were divided into two departments ; the internal concerns, which related to their own community, and the external ones, which regarded the public at large ; again, some of their occupations demanded intellectual, whilst others only required bodily labour. Such, however, was the mercy of God, that persons were abundantly supplied, suited to every necessity ; and so great was the humility of the recluses, that each, with thankful-

ness, accepted his own post. None considered the place his birth entitled him to, so much as in what mode he might best serve his brethren.

Hence, some were employed in manual labour, some in assisting the poor, and others in study. They cultivated the farms and gardens ; they repaired the house, and supplied every article of clothing amongst themselves. There were carpenters, ploughmen, farmers, gardeners, glaziers, shoemakers, and vine dressers, whose accurate workmanship appeared as though they had never practised any thing else ; yet the recollection and devotion visible in their countenances, marked them as saints, and their manners betrayed them as natives of a court. Others contributed their talents to the good of the public. Several studied physic and surgery. Others became acquainted with the law, in order to reconcile differences amongst their poorer neighbours. Four of the recluses who practised as physicians, were solely occupied in visiting the poor. Two of them became the most eminent practitioners of their age. Some supplied the pulpit, and ministered to the spiritual wants of their brethren. Considerable numbers were devoted to supply both the temporal and spiritual necessities of the peasantry around. Some carried them food ; others nursed them, and watched them, even in the most infectious complaints. Many bestowed their care entirely on the education of their children. Distinct establishments were formed for the poor and the rich.

Meantime, the fame of Port Royal became more widely diffused. Many noblemen and gentlemen of fortune entreated the pious and learned recluses, to undertake the education of their children. Several persons of property, influenced by religious motives, gave up their parks and houses to be appropriated to school-houses and play-grounds. By this means, the Port Royal schools were furnished with every possible accommodation. Many of these little establishments were soon formed in various places. One was situated at Chénet, another at des Troux, a third was at Paris, and two of them at Port Royal. These little academies were organized by men of the first piety and learning. Persons of the most eminent abilities devoted themselves to the children's instruction. M. de Saci, Claude Lancelot, Nicole, and Fontaine, were amongst the number of the preceptors.

It were extraordinary had not the pupils of such masters been eminently distinguished. The plan of Tillemont's immense and laborious works was traced out and arranged at the early age of nineteen, whilst he was yet at the school of Chénet. Some of the finest verses in Racine's tragedies were meditated, whilst a boy at school, in the woods of Port Royal. Others of the recluses occupied themselves in study; they composed works, which not only enlightened their own age, but to which ours is deeply indebted. Some of the best translations of the Fathers, and the most edifying accounts of the saints, issued from the



solitudes of Port Royal. The controversial and theological works of Arnauld, the thoughts and letters of Pascal, the moral essays of Nicole, the deeply spiritual letters of Saci, were all composed in this seclusion. These works gained the esteem of the religious, whilst the grammars they had drawn up for the schools obtained, and still maintain, the universal suffrage of the learned.

In a short time, the recluses of Port Royal became, an universal theme of discourse and admiration.

Port Royal des Champs.—Les Granges.—Esprit de Port Royal, and La Mère Angélique.

IN the mean while the nuns at Port Royal de Paris, had again greatly extended their numbers. They now exceeded one hundred and eighty. It became necessary once more to divide them. It was resolved to station a detachment of the community at their old habitation of Port Royal des Champs. The rest it was determined should remain at Paris.

The news of the nuns' intended return was soon spread at Port Royal. The whole neighbourhood evinced the greatest joy. It was delightful again to see them, after twenty-five years' absence.

The recluses used every exertion to prepare the house and gardens. They put them in the best order for their friends. Their own books and furniture were soon packed up. On the morning of the very day the nuns were expected, they removed from the monastery. They took possession of a farm-house belonging to it, which was situated on the top of the hill.

The M. Angélique was at that time abbess by election. She came herself to establish the nuns

in their former habitation. On the day she was expected, all the poor flocked to the monastery, in their best clothes. As soon as the long file of carriages appeared through the woods at the top of the hill, they all went to meet her. The bells were immediately rung ; shouts of joy, and exclamations of pleasure resounded on all sides. The procession stopped ; then the poor with tears implored their good mother's benediction. She tenderly embraced them. At the church door she was met by all the recluses. They led the nuns into the choir, and, after service, left them in possession of the monastery. The recluses retired to their new habitation of Les Granges.

The institution of Port Royal was now in a flourishing condition.

The nuns and recluses never, indeed, saw each other but at church ; even there a grate separated them ; nor had they any intercourse, though so nearly related, but by letter. Nevertheless, both the communities might be considered as forming one body. Both were under the same spiritual direction. Each was animated by one and the same spirit.

The recluses continued all their former occupations ; they conducted the farms and gardens, and performed every other laborious office. The nuns superintended girls' schools, educated young women, fed and clothed the poor, instructed their own sex, and nursed the sick. These two societies (which together contained eighteen of the Arnauld family) were yet more closely united by grace,


than by ties of blood. They were perfectly joined together in one heart and mind, all saying the same thing, and all having the same views of love to God and love to man.

In truth, no religious society throughout the whole extent of Catholic Christendom, had established a higher reputation than Port Royal, or was more eminent, either for the sanctity or erudition of its members.

Nor was the female part of the establishment in the monastery less distinguished for its virtues, than the company of recluses, who inhabited Les Granges.

The very exterior of this institution, announced the animating spirit of piety that reigned within.

The gravity and liturgic simplicity, and yet touching and chastened pathos with which the praises of God were sung, and the profound reverence and devotion with which the service was performed, touched the heart of every person who visited this seclusion. Even the minute details of divine service, the neatness, order, and regularity, of their choir ; the solemn and imposing grandeur of architecture, which characterised the church ; and the perfect plainness which distinguished all the vestments and vessels used in the service, did not fail to impress the mind. The modesty, recollection, and simplicity of the servants ; the solitude of the parlours, the discretion and modesty of the nuns, their polite and kind attention to those who had occasion to



speaking to them, and their total absence of curiosity respecting all that was transacted in the world, formed a theme of universal admiration and eulogium.

How much more was the monastery of Port Royal venerated by those, who were intimately acquainted with its interior, and who continually found there new sources of edification. How deep was the peace, how holy the spirit of humility and retirement, how pure and spiritual the temperance and self-denial, and how fervent and zealous the spirit of charity which reigned within the walls of its enclosure. In this truly admirable community might be seen united, a rare example of industry, inspired by charity, and continued without intermission or relaxation ; of prayer without any suspension ; of faith, bearing continual and abundant fruits. In this society, ambition had no place, nor was any contention found, but who should fill up the most vile, the most laborious, and most humiliating offices. No impatience was to be discovered in the sisters, nor any caprice in the mothers : and it might be truly said, that in this blessed community, christian love burnt with a bright, a burning, a clear and steady flame ; alike rendering obedience prompt, command reasonable, and devotion to God, all in all.

But nothing ever approached to the complete and entire disinterestedness, which so eminently characterised Port Royal : and which, from the abbess to the last of the servants, glowed as one soul, with an open and munificent generosity.

During the whole of the sixty years which elapsed before an unjust persecution forbid the reception of novices, it was never heard, nor did even calumny breathe, that either any contract or tacit convention was once entered into for the dowry of the nuns. Novices were retained on trial for two years, and if at the end of that time their vocation was judged to be solidly grounded, the parents were informed that their children were received to profession, and an arrangement was made with them as to the day when the ceremony should take place.

The profession being made, unconditionally, if the parents were not rich, no donation under any pretext was allowed ; if they were, whatever they chose to offer was received as an alms : and a very considerable part of this alms was always reserved to distribute either amongst destitute families, or poor religious communities.

In one instance, they gave as a single present to a distressed community, a sum of twenty thousand francs, which had just been left to their house ; and what rendered it remarkable was, that at the very time the attorney was drawing out the deed of gift, the steward of Port Royal, who was ignorant of the transaction, came to consult him how to raise money on the rents not yet due, the house being at that time in the most urgent distress.

Never did the rank or obscurity, or the wealth or poverty of a novice, enter into the calculation of the Mère Angélique.

She was never more delighted, than when girls presented themselves in a state of the most destitute poverty, and when she saw them afraid lest they should be rejected on that account, she always used to encourage them, saying kindly, “ come in, come in, my dear sisters! our house is not in want of wealth, but of good nuns ; if you are such, you confer upon us by coming, the greatest benefit we can receive.

Once a lady of very high rank and great wealth, made a donation to Port Royal of a benefaction of eighty thousand livres ; requesting it might be used in order to liquidate the heavy debts which had necessarily been incurred in fitting up the house of Port Royal de Paris ; and also to erect several buildings very much wanted, both at Port Royal de Paris, and Port Royal des Champs ; and which indeed were become indispensably necessary, in consequence of the rapid augmentation of the community. It consisted of about two hundred choir nuns, between three and four hundred pupils, besides lay-sisters, novices and postulants. Many ladies also boarded in the monastic precincts, and had apartments there, so that the buildings required were very considerable.


The money was appropriated according to the lady’s direction. She soon after became a boarder in chambers at Port Royal, without at first entertaining any other desire than that of ending her days in the house, without taking the vows. In process of time, however, she wished to take the veil. She was then admitted to the noviciate ;

during which time she passed through the same trials as all other novices. The two years being at length expired, she urged her reception to make her profession. The M. Angélique, and her nuns, clearly foresaw the serious difficulties to which they might be exposed, if they refused her : nevertheless, as they were convinced in conscience that she had not a sufficient vocation, she was unanimously rejected.

The lady quitted the convent in sore displeasure, and immediately resolved to reclaim her donation. Had they allowed it to proceed to a trial, the nuns would have infallibly retained the whole ; but they preferred touching her heart by a bright example, to maintaining their own indisputable right.

The abbess immediately sold some rents at a heavy loss ; they retrenched every expence that was not absolutely necessary, and borrowed some money at high interest, to raise this enormous sum ; which by great exertions, and very great deprivations, they finally accomplished. It was restored to the lady by a notary, in presence of M. le Nain, father of M. Tillemont, and Master of Requests, and of M. Palluau, counsellor of parliament ; both of whom openly declared, that they were as much charmed with the spirit and disinterestedness of Madame de Port Royal and her nuns, as they were ill edified by the mean, vindictive, and self-interested conduct of their pretended benefactress.

Two young ladies who were sisters, once presented themselves for admission at Port Royal.



The eldest had a fortune of a thousand crowns left her by her godmother ; the other had absolutely nothing. Both were well disposed young persons, and conducted themselves so well, whilst postulants, as to be received into the noviciate. But on trial, the same vocation was not recognized in them both ; the one who had the thousand crowns was received to profession, and the one who had nothing was sent back ; but she received as a dowry the thousand crowns of her sister.

Whenever the M. Angélique, found herself obliged to dismiss postulants, or novices for profession as lay sisters, (and who consequently belonged to a station in which they depended on their own labor) she never permitted them to quit the monastery, without presenting them with a sum of money, equivalent to what they might have earned at their business, during the time they remained on trial.

The perfect disinterestedness of the monastery of Port Royal, with respect to novices, was probably one cause of the very strong attachment the nuns always felt for that house, and the honor they always considered it, to be received to profession.

One day, a gentleman of rank being come on business to Port Royal, asked to speak to the Mère Angélique de St. Jean, who was at that time abbess. She, being engaged at that moment in giving particular orders, sent another nun to supply her place for a few moments, till she should have despatched the concerns which detained her.

The gentleman began speaking of the monastery. In answer to his enquiries, the nun spoke during the whole time, of nothing but her profound gratitude to that house, for the very great charity and indulgence it had shewn in receiving her to profession. The gentleman to whom she spoke, concluded her to be some poor, indigent, friendless girl, received on charity, which he knew was very frequent at Port Royal. At this juncture, the abbess entering the parlour, the nun rose and retired. After having made his compliments, and despatched the business on which he came, he did not fail to observe to the abbess, how highly edified he had been at the lively gratitude of the good sister who had just left the parlour, for the charity that house had shewn her; and that it was a double subject of edification, to see the perfect disinterestedness of their house, in thus receiving poor girls gratuitously.

The abbess was at first totally at a loss to comprehend what he meant, but afterwards recollecting the nun who was just gone, she told him with a smile “that the supposed *poor girl*, was the lady Magdalena,” of St. Christina, Briquet; sole heiress,

* Author of some of “*Les Vies Edifiantes*, and editor of *Lettres Spirituelles de Sacy*.” She was the most intimate friend of the Countess Eustoquie de Flescelles de Brégy, author of “*La Vie de Madame Suireau des Anges*,” and a nun at Port Royal. The splendid part these ladies performed and sustained during the grand persecution of their house, is recorded at large in every history of Port Royal. They alone, when the abbesses were imprisoned, appeared by their zeal, and talent, and force of character, the

at an early age, of the immense succession of the celebrated M. Bignon, Advocate general of France, and of the very considerable fortune of her father, M. Briquet, Master of Requests. That in truth,

defence of the whole house. Their fortitude under the rigorous imprisonment they endured was equally admirable. They were celebrated also for the ready wit, with which they often disarmed their persecutors.

Threats, persecutions, and close imprisonments, having been tried for several years in vain, it was determined to send a relation of Madame de Brégy's, who had a place at court, to urge her to sign the formulary. The Countess accordingly drove over, one morning, from the levee at Versailles, in full dress, to enter into a theological discussion with the nun. The lady, after prefacing her discourse with the wishes of the court, the evils to her family of losing court-favor, came to religious motives; here however, she found herself not so much at home; and after a few vain attempts cut short her harangue, by the inquiry, "How she could possibly refuse to conform to a command issued by the Pope, or deny the obligation of the authority of St. Peter's successor?" To which Madame de St. Brégy replied with a smile, "Indeed, my dear Countess, I had not imagined it had been of any higher obligation than the command, 'woman's adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and wearing of gold, and putting on of apparel,' which was given to all the churches by St. Peter himself." The full dressed Countess was silenced, and after a moment took her leave.

Another time, after various imprisonments, and other persecutions, and various discussions on the part of the Archbishop of Paris, (who it must be remembered is Metropolitan of France,) he being out of all patience, at length exclaimed "Whether you believe the formulary or not, do but sign, and I am willing to bear the sin, if it be one, for you;" to which she replied, bowing with good-humoured archness, "Pardon me, my Lord, I should be too much grieved to add to your grace's heavy incumbrances, the least additional burthen." *See the lives of these ladies in the Necrol. Clem. Bes. Poul. and the Vies Edifiantes, &c. &c.*

she had brought to the house immense wealth ; and that she was a lady equally distinguished for her solid understanding, her strength of character, and her literary and musical talents, as for her piety and humility.

The spirit of disinterestedness and generosity which animated Port Royal, from the establishment of the reform, to the very last hour of its existence, was amongst the blessed fruits of the Mère Angélique, and was originally inspired by her example.

This admirable abbess truly had her affections set on things above ; her peace was therefore never disturbed by temporal misfortunes, nor her desires excited by merely temporal goods.

She might eminently be said, to be wholly void of that covetousness which is idolatry. Her soul being fixed on God, the fluctuation of all created goods never shook the foundation of her peace. And the spirit of piety and disinterestedness produced that perfect tranquillity of mind, which the Mère Angélique always manifested, under all the accidents which befel the temporal affairs of Port Royal.

One day, Le Petit Port Royal, a very large farm belonging to the monastery, took fire.


This accident having occurred on Sunday morning, during mass, nobody was at home, except a little boy, who was left to take care of the house. The lad was so terrified and amazed at the flames and volumes of smoke, that he stood petrified, and gazing at the spreading conflagration, in all the



stupor of fear ; without once thinking of calling on the neighbours, to lend their assistance. The consequence of this panic was, that the loss was very considerable. Besides the buildings, barns, stables, hay-ricks, wool-stacks, wine-presses, and all the stores, which were completely consumed ; all the poultry and cattle were destroyed, together with five horses, and all the linen.

M. Arnauld was desired to inform his sister, the abbess, of so grievous a disaster ; and to tell her with discretion, as it was feared so heavy a loss might greatly affect her. She, however, heard him with perfect tranquillity, and when he had done speaking, replied with a smile of satisfaction, “ God be praised, that this is all ! Come, brother, let us go, and immediately offer up our fervent thanks to God, that no lives are lost.”

She discovered the same calmness on another occasion, when one night all their flocks were ravaged by a wolf. Of this accident, M. Arnauld was also commissioned to inform her. “ I was going,” said she in reply, “ to send to the fair, to buy more sheep ; but God, no doubt, finds we had too many, since he sent this wolf to destroy them. We must not, however, refuse ourselves some pleasure, to counterbalance this accident. Let all the wounded sheep be killed, and distributed among the peasants, that there may not be to-morrow, one poor peasant’s house in all the villages round Port Royal, where the spit does not turn.”



The same disinterested spirit pervaded every part of the conduct of the nuns at Port Royal. And though the absolutely necessary expenditure of this large establishment amounted, annually, to about fifty thousand livres ; and though their revenues, independently of the donations which were made them, only certainly amounted to seven thousand, they never pursued any other conduct, nor did they ever fail in the performance of any one engagement. One of the most edifying proofs of the entire emancipation of the abbess from the cunning spirit of this world, was, the great care she took, even in periods of the most urgent necessities and pressing wants, to conceal their poverty from those affluent and powerful friends, who were the most anxiously desirous to assist them.

“ My dear daughters,” said this excellent abbess, “ we have taken a vow of poverty ; it is not being in truth poor, to expose our deprivations to generous friends, whom we know to be always ready to impart their wealth with rich abundance.”

The active beneficence of the abbess was equal to her disinterestedness.

It was a maxim continually inculcated at Port Royal, that retirement and seclusion is not therefore necessarily religious seclusion. They were continually reminded, that persons quit the world for various motives ; and that the dissipations and interests which beguile or distract the heart of worldly men, are perhaps as often renounced from disappointment, vexation, and inactivity, as from

a genuine dedication of the heart to God : and that even those whose motive has been pure, in thus consecrating themselves by the vows of religion, should continually examine themselves, to see that they persevered in walking, not only in the perfect way, but wisely in the perfect way.

“ Nothing,” said the excellent abbess of Port Royal, “ is more easy than to deceive ourselves, as to the ground and intents of the heart, in those actions which, when once performed, constitute a choice for life. The motive was perhaps pure which at first inspired it ; and because the same outward course remains, we are too apt to flatter ourselves, that the same internal devotion, zeal, and singleness of heart, still continue ; whereas too often, the habit by which a course of life is continued, is wholly different from the choice by which it was established. And if the human heart be so corrupt, that even an apostle found it necessary to seek constant aid from above, and that the inner man should be renewed day by day, do not let us flatter ourselves, with vainly trusting to a dead and formal adhesion to those works, we once adopted from spiritual and living faith. It may be said with equal advantage, both to the novice who has her profession to make, and to the nun who has already made it on the best grounds, examine your own hearts ; there is an indolent retirement from the world, which arises from sloth ; there is a selfish retirement which originates in a misanthropic absorption in our own concerns ; there is a melancholy retirement, which

is grounded on disappointed self-love ; and there is a philosophic retirement, which has its basis in pride and contempt of others. Far different from all these anti-christian dispositions, is a genuine religious retirement. The christian's seclusion is founded on a deep experience of the corruption and deceitfulness of his own heart ; nor is it deserving of that holy name, unless whilst he comes out from amongst worldly men, to wait upon God in silence, and to renew his strength either in solitude, or by the example of his saints ; he also assiduously and diligently labors, by his industry and his talents, as well as in his prayers, to serve to the very uttermost, even that secular society, conscience has led him to quit as associates."

Accordingly, the monastery of Port Royal was equally distinguished for the munificence and zeal of its liberality and charity ; for the superiority of the education, at once liberal and religious, which was given to its very numerous pupils ; and which furnished France with so great a number of characters, distinguished for piety and good conduct, alike in the world as in monastic seclusions. It was, too, scarcely less celebrated for the valuable religious and biographical works, published by many of its members. The works of La Mère Agnès, La M. Angélique, La M. Angélique de St. Jean, Madame Madeleine, de St. Christine Briquet, Madame St. Eustoquie de Flescelles de Brégy, Madame Jacqueline de St. Euphemie Pascal, Madame de Ligny, and the Lettres de

Madame du Valois, though but little known in this country, are, in wisdom, enlightened piety, good taste, and solidity of judgment, only to be surpassed by the bright examples afforded by the lives of their authors.

It is scarcely credible, how many poor families, both in Paris and in the country, were relieved by the extensive charities of the two houses of Port Royal. For a very considerable time Port Royal des Champs had regular surgeons and physicians, on purpose to attend the poor. They were all persons of known piety. They visited all the villages round about, carrying with them medicine and the Testament, which latter some of them were in the habit of reading as they walked, in order to enable them at once to become useful physicians to the souls, as to the bodies of their patients.

Nor did the nuns merely depute others, to perform these acts of charity. They studied the surgical art themselves, and dressed the most loathsome wounds of the poor, with wonderful charity and dexterity.

Instead of all those frivolous works, by which the industry of other nuns is generally occupied, and rendered subservient to the vanity or curiosity of persons in the world ; it was equally astonishing and admirable to observe with how much industry, economy, and neatness, the nuns of Port Royal contrived to put together the least scraps, or bring the least remnants into use, and to make clothing for the multitudes of poor

women and children who had nothing wherewith to cover themselves ; and it was perfectly wonderful how, when in the midst of poverty, and unjustly stripped of their property by persecution, their indefatigable christian charity furnished them with a multitude of resources and ingenious contrivances to assist others. God, who seeth in secret, knows how often their largesses have been poured out, with kind abundance, to the poor without their gates, when they have deprived themselves of their own subsistence, and given their own bread, rather than deny others ; and God, who doth see in secret, shall assuredly one day reward them openly.

In all these respects, the M. Angélique herself set the example to her nuns.

She had a peculiar and admirable talent in nursing, consoling, and beneficially influencing the sick. She visited them, watched over them, and found time to render them the very meanest services, even with her own hands. Nor did she only assist them in slight illnesses ; far unlike the lax morality of the present day, her truly divine zeal led her to visit those equally who labored under the most contagious disorders. The most loathsome wounds, the most infectious diseases, and the most malignant fevers never deterred her from attendance ; and she continually nursed persons suffering under their influence herself.

It might be justly said of her, that death had lost its sting ; and hence she was enabled to follow the injunction of inspiration ; and as Christ

had laid down his life for her, so was she willing to lay down her's for her sisters.

She made it a point, constantly to inquire into the state of the neighbourhood ; not only bestowing ample charities amongst the poor, but taking, and placing out, and providing for their orphan children.

Within the inclosure of the monastery, she erected a very large infirmary, where the poor women and children of the neighbourhood, were nursed in sickness, and had medicines dispensed to them ; or their wounds properly dressed, if they were surgical cases. The abbess often bled them with her own hands.

She had an obedience established in the convent, expressly for the purpose of clothing the poor, and another for that of their children. These clothes were spun, wove, cut out, and made up, by the industry of the nuns.

If the children happened to come without their mothers, the abbess has often been seen herself to strip off their rags, wash them, and put on their new clothes. If, by any chance, the stores in the obediences were exhausted, the M. Angélique took the linen of the monastery, from their several obediences, and had it made up for the poor ; teaching the nuns to deprive themselves of it, rather than let the poor go without.

One great end and duty of a monastic institution, is, she said, to help the poor who have no other help ; if, therefore, we fail in that, we do not fulfil one great end of our vocation.

The M. Angélique not only zealously inculcated the principles of charity ; but her prudence contemplated the means, by which it can be efficaciously reduced to practice.

She therefore had all her nuns instructed in the strictest economy, she allowed nothing to be lost, but had the least remnants turned to account.

Nay, the charity of this eminent christian was so fervent, that, when the house was in great straits, she has been known to part with all the church-plate of both houses, even down to the very silver lamps and candlesticks ; nay, she has even taken the very napkins off the altar, to make clothes, or bind up the wounds of the poor.

The M. Angélique was not only a decided, but an elevated christian. A person of a grand and comprehensive mind ; who knew when to sacrifice the appendages of religious profession, to the immutable principles of religion itself.

The spirit of this excellent abbess pervaded her whole community. At the very period above mentioned, the great necessities of their own house being the subject of conversation, a sister of the M. Angélique, who was also a nun at Port Royal, was present, and having gone through her relation, terminated it by saying, with a countenance beaming with benevolence, “ Well ! I do not think there is any one thing in the world, that can give one such lively pleasure, as to assist those who are in want. And yet, perhaps after all there is, however, one still more elevated ; which is to have given away every thing, and to afford the

same pleasure to children of God, by receiving what our good Lord chuses to send us by their hands."

The charity of Port Royal was, however, by no means bounded by the necessities of the lower classes of the community. She extended her inquiries to the families of tradesmen, whom she often rescued from destruction, by timely loans, and by placing their children in schools, or where they might learn trades; nay, she privately informed herself concerning all the families of decayed gentry in the neighbourhood; many of them were assisted by sums of money, who were never able to trace the hand from whence they came. Several families she completely maintained, and had their children suitably educated, and provided for; taking the daughters into the school attached to the monastery.*

Besides this munificent charity to secular persons, both the M. Angélique and all other abbesses of Port Royal, always appropriated a tenth both of their income, and of all the donations they received, either to charitable institutions, or to distressed but pious religious communities. If it so happened that these rents or donations came at a moment of such pressing necessity that it was impossible to reserve them, the procuratrix^b en-

* See, for almost all the preceding articles of charity and disinterestedness, Besogne, tom. i. p. 56—72, and many others as striking.

^b The Procuratrix is the nun who pays the bills, keeps the

tered it as a debt in her account book, and it was paid as soon as possible.

It was a very frequent observation of the M. Angélique, that a true christian will have before his eyes the danger of wealth, more than that of poverty, and the fear of superfluity more than that of necessity.

Nor were these sentiments confined to the abbess, they extended to the very lowest servants who were attached to the house.

One of the carters of Port Royal, named Innocent Fai, used always to eat the bran bread made for the dogs, in order to give his own portion to the poor. Being possessed of a little piece of land, he sold it for four hundred livres : one hundred he gave to deliver a prisoner, and the remaining three hundred he gave out to poor families in weekly allowances. One piece of land he kept in corn, which, after his work was over, he used to thresh out himself; his friend the miller of Port Royal, having ground it, and his sister baked it, he gave it to the poor, as well as his wages, which he laid out in clothes for them. Perceiving his charities were spoken of, he begged a friend to distribute them in his own name ; but he refusing to give them as his own, he then begged the nuns of Port Royal to keep his wages, and let them be distributed amongst the charities of the house. Whenever his work was done, he used to go into

stores, and transacts the business of the monastery. Something between a house-steward and a housekeeper.

the stable, and shutting the door, spend his leisure in prayer; pretending if any one came in and surprised him kneeling, to look for something, as though he had dropped it in the litter between the horses. He also used to be very diligent in reading Scripture, and the nuns having given him a little room of his own with a key, he used to shut himself up there, and copy out passages of Scripture, that he might learn them by heart. These he repeated as he pursued his daily labour, and they formed the subject of his conversation with his fellow-servants and with the poor. He always went very thinly clad, and literally fulfilled the precept; "let him that hath two coats impart to him that hath none." One winter he passed without shoes and stockings, having spent all his money, and having stripped himself of them to give to a poor old woman whom he saw as he was working out of doors. A gentleman one day, seeing him in this condition, told him, "he was a great fool," and asked him, "where he had learnt to strip himself in this manner?" he replied, "in the Bible." "You are an ignorant, stupid fellow," returned the gentleman, "and misunderstand it. You are the first poor person for whom you should keep your little property, and not leave yourself to die like a dog on a dunghill, in your old age, and to starve for want." "Sir," returned Innocent Fai, with great animation, "it is not wealth that can supply our real wants, but Providence; and if we do not submit our desires to him, we may, in the midst of wealth, not only suffer from real

wants, but be tormented by the multitudes of factitious ones. Death will come, and when it does come, the conscience would be more tormented by superfluity, than the body by want."

The M. Angélique de St. Jean, who traces the character of Innocent ai, in the *Necrologe de Port Royal*, adds, "It is remarkable that Innocent Fai died just one fortnight after this conversation," having not one penny in his pocket, but assisted by the best advice of the six first physicians in France; nursed, not by hirelings, but by the recluses of Port Royal; men whose education was in courts, whose names on earth were amongst the princes of the land and in heaven who were enrolled amongst the saints. His funeral was attended with honor by a large community, whose numbers and whose names were equally calculated to bestow religious or worldly respect on his remains.

It is equally remarkable, that the gentleman who gave him advice, lived a long and worldly life; he died in a noble mansion-house, situated in his own magnificent grounds, in a splendid room, on a bed of down. But his family had flown from the scene of sickness. The tardy footsteps of the often called, and often vainly expected hireling, alone broke the drear solitude of his empty palace; and the physician pronounced his doom to the indifferent ears of strangers. Then he found that the hand of unattached servitude, which alone relieves the wants of the ungodly rich, is colder

than that with which casual charity relieves the poor. But whether he died the death of the just, his nearest relatives did not leave their scenes of dissipation to enquire.

One of the chief excellencies of Port Royal, and one which perhaps the most excited envy against it, was the admirable education bestowed upon children. It was equally luminous, judicious, and religious. Never was there any asylum, in which the comparative innocence and purity of childhood, and early youth, remained more completely unsullied by the contamination of the world ; nor in which the education was better adapted to the various ages and talents of the pupils intrusted to their care. This institution, far unlike most schools under the care of monasteries, did not confine its care to the merely innocent habits, which arise from not being exposed to the society of the vicious. The truths of christianity were solidly, and luminously taught. The scriptures, and the psalter, were not only diligently studied and explained, both in french and latin, but they were read in the attitude of prayer : they were preceded by a solemn prayer for divine assistance to understand and apply the weighty truths they revealed ; and they were succeeded by a pause of meditation, and self-examination. The church liturgy was also taught and explained, both in latin and in french.

The lessons of piety, which the young ladies of Port Royal received, were still farther impressed upon their hearts, not only by the examples of the

nuns, who were appointed to be their instructors ; but by the practice of a large and pious community, solely occupied in praising God, and in serving him in their neighbour. But the education of Port Royal did not merely confine itself to religious principles ; it embraced every detail of religious practice ; habits of not only acting, but feeling, kindly and respectfully towards others ; of being at once discreet and sincere ; in short, the whole art of christian social duties and talents, founded on religious principles, was eminently taught in this excellent school. Nor were the instructions of the nuns limited to a pious education ; very great assiduity was used, in improving and strengthening the understanding, in giving habits of mental activity, and habits of prompt voluntary exertion of the mind. The minds of the pupils of Port Royal, were solidly and thoroughly cultivated ; and where they perceived the germ of peculiar talents, the education they received under the sisters of the Pascals, Arnaulds, &c. was far different indeed from that, which any public system of education, ever elsewhere afforded to ladies. Where this distinction was not perceived, the education of Port Royal was equally calculated to render them accomplished mistresses of distinguished families, or perfect and devoted nuns. The same spirit of devotion and piety was inculcated in either case.

It would be very easy to cite a prodigious number of young ladies educated in these monasteries, who have since edified the world, the court, or

the cloister, by their wisdom, piety, and talent. It is well known with what sentiments of admiration, gratitude, and reverence, they always spoke of the education they received at Port Royal. And those who were turned out by an arbitrary royal mandate, retained to their latest breath, amidst the vicissitudes of the world, and the splendors of the court, the same affection for this desolated house, as the Jews preserved in their captivity, for the ruins of Jerusalem.

Perhaps it would be difficult to find a short composition of more pathos, than the letter which one of these exiled scholars wrote to the abbess of Port Royal. The shortness of our limits alone prevents its finding a place in these pages.

We will not, however, close this subject, without observing, that although many treatises on education have appeared in modern times, and many which have been distinguished for the splendid talents of the writers, perhaps not many amongst them surpass in true wisdom, in a deep knowledge of the human heart, or reality of experience, the luminous “*Reglemens des Enfants*,” composed by the M. Agnès. Nor is it to be forgotten, that whilst the press teems with numberless theories, proposing plans of education, this little, but inestimable work, details a system which has been tried, and that with unexampled success, for above sixty years; and which, at the end of a hundred and fifty years, still entitles its venerable author to the reverence due to transcendant piety, and the admiration due to supereminent talent.

The portion of this work, on the spirit in which christian instructors should undertake education, and the principles on which they should proceed, is surely well worth the study of all those who undertake or promote the education of children.

Nor ought we to forget, in closing our list of the charities of Port Royal, the spiritual blessings which were so abundantly diffused by the extensive correspondence they carried on, with piously disposed persons of every degree ; so that, from the retirement of this seclusion, they spread a blessing over all France.

But the munificent assistance which the house of Port Royal itself received, was no less remarkable, than the liberality with which it distributed help to others.

The instances of wholly unexpected and opportune donations at moments of distress, when their only refuge was in united prayer, which are recorded in its annals, are equally remarkable and edifying. Although the estates, with which the monastery was endowed, only produced the annual rent of seven thousand livres ; and that the necessary expenses of the house amounted to nearly ten times that sum ; yet the M. Angélique often said, she never had felt a moment's anxiety, and that she never had entered into any necessary expense for her community, or engaged in any incumbent work of charity, but the Providence of God had, in the issue, sent her wherewith amply to defray it. She therefore went on giving, whilst she had a quarter of a crown in the house, when she was

asked by the truly necessitous ; and not turning away from those who would borrow of her ; or distressing herself with anxious thoughts for the morrow, what they should eat, what they should drink, or wherewithal they should be clothed ; and the event abundantly fulfilled the word, that God knew they had need of all these things.

They sought first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and without anxious cares on their part, all these things were richly added unto them.

Often, indeed, they suffered temporary want ; but in the end, Providence poured in assistance with such ample abundance, that it appeared as though the Lord, whom they so disinterestedly served, and so faithfully trusted, returned into the bosom of this holy house an hundred fold, for all the wealth they scattered with so munificent a generosity.

Exclusive of the presents continually sent them, of articles of supply, and present consumption of the house, immense donations were, from time to time, made to the monastery.

Amongst others, M. Arnauld, father of the M. Angélique, who bore so prominent a part in the 'Journée du guichet,' laid out immense sums, not only in repairing and re-establishing the ancient buildings of Port Royal ; but, to shew his entire acquiescence in that seclusion he had so much opposed, he, at his own expense, encircled all the monastic inclosure, with the strong stone wall by which it is now bounded ; the old one, which had

been raised of earth, being decayed and sunk every where, and, in some places, no traces of it remained.

Madame Arnauld, his widow, as it was before observed, purchased the magnificent hotel de Clagny, for the establishment of Port Royal de Paris. The purchase money of which alone, independently of the fitting up, cost twenty-four thousand livres. The Marchioness of Aumont defrayed the expence of erecting the church, and refitting the interior of the house. The Princesse de Guimenée, and the Marchioness of Sablé, conjointly built the cloisters and the sacristy. They also contributed, with the Marchioness of Acquaviva, the celebrated Marchioness of Sevigné, Madame le Maitre, and the Baroness of Guenegaud, in erecting many distinct piles of buildings in the courts, for school-houses, infirmaries, store-houses, and offices ; houses for ladies who boarded in the establishment, &c. &c.

Besides this assistance, very considerable accessions accrued to the property of Port Royal, from the families of several of the nuns, or the donations of those ladies of independent fortune, who took the veil there ; as the Marchioness of Chazé, the Countesses de St. Ange, de Rubentel le Camus, the Lady Madeleine Briquet, her friend the Countess of Brégy, &c. &c.

Madame de Bardeau alone, gave thirty thousand livres.

The monastery of Port Royal received also frequent legacies from the recluses, who died at Les

Granges ; M. M. le Maître de Sericourt, and de Saci, left the monastery their whole possessions. M. Benoise, counsellor of the parliament, and M. Briquet, Advocate-general of France, gave a thousand crowns each. The Abbé de la Potheri, a rent upon salt of fifty crowns ; and the Queen of Poland presented them with an agate ciborium, estimated at four thousand crowns, besides many other presents equally rich and valuable.

Nor did the house of Port Royal des Champs, meet with patronage less munificent. It was, by the generosity of friends, completely repaired and refitted. Or rather, it was entirely rebuilt, and enlarged to four times its former extent ; under the direction, and chiefly at the expense of the Duke de Luynes, M. d'Andilly, the Marquis of Sevigné, and M. Gué de Bagnols. The latter expended upon it forty thousand livres, besides a rent of six thousand livres, with which he endowed the monastery in perpetuity. The Duke de Liancourt, the Duchess his wife, and M. de Luzanci, each gave a donation of ten thousand livres, and the Marquis de St. Ange, all his fortune. The Duke of Pontchateau, also, made very considerable donations to Port Royal. The Duke de Luynes built the mansion of Vaumurier, which he afterwards presented to Port Royal ; and M. de Liancourt erected a large range of buildings in the court, for the reception of those guests, whose piety led them to renew their strength, by a temporary seclusion amongst the inmates of Port Royal. The Duchess of Longueville built a noble

house, and laid out spacious gardens within the monastic inclosure, where she usually spent some months in the year.

Besides these pecuniary largesses, and a multitude without number, of private alms continually bestowed, by persons known and unknown, the domains of the monastery were very materially increased in value, by the labors of the recluses. The farms were repaired, re-established, and ameliorated. The stagnant waters were drained, and formed into clear lakes, abounding with fish. The woods, gardens, and orchards, were assiduously cultivated and enlarged. The fruit of Port Royal, indeed, was celebrated for its extraordinary size and fine flavor ; so much so, that when M. d'Andilly annually sent presents to the Queen Mother, Anne of Austria, Cardinal Mazarin used to call it, " Fruit bénit."

Such were the largesses bestowed by the friends of piety upon Port Royal. Truly might it be said, in this instance, that as they gave, so was it given to them, and with the same measure they meted to the distresses of others, so was it measured to them again ; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, did men give into their bosoms.

CHAP. V.

Civil Wars.—Horrors of the Antichristia Practice of War.

IN this prodigious influx of wealth, although their establishment was enlarged, the nuns of Port Royal remained unchanged ; their munificence was diffused more extensively without ; but the same temperance and self-denial reigned within. Nay, all these great additions to the monastery, proved a means of very considerably benefiting both the poor, and the whole neighbourhood. The M. Angélique considered the poor, in the manner even of conducting these buildings. She suffered the work to be suspended, during the hay and corn harvest, and the vintage, when employment was to be readily obtained in agriculture ; but as soon as it began to decline from that source, and the poor were in want of work, she collected all hands to go on with the building. During the second war of Paris, mostly termed the war of the princes, she was advised to desist from these additions and improvements, till it should be over, as the materials were much increased in price ; nor could they ever be

brought, without a considerable escort, and even then they were liable to pillage. But the M. Angélique was not to be deterred by such considerations ; on the contrary, she determined to prosecute the buildings with redoubled vigor ; that she might, with masons, escorts, watches, messengers, &c. have an opportunity of maintaining, by their own independent labor, double or treble the number of persons she would have employed in a time of peace. It is impossible to describe the blessing this proved to the whole neighbourhood. Not only a maintenance was by this means afforded to an incredible number of country people, who were literally starving ; but it was equally beneficial in preserving a multitude of men, women, and children, (by useful occupation) from falling into those habits of idleness, vice, and pillage, to which they were tempted by the misery of the times.

The expense, indeed, of the buildings, was by these means rendered enormous.

A gentleman riding through the valley of Port Royal, and looking at the vast piles, which constituted the monastery, observed to a servant whom he accidentally met :—" These buildings, I understand, have cost double the sum they ought." " Sir," returned the man, " the price did not seem great to the nuns, since every stone was accompanied by the benedictions of the whole country."

Both the monasteries and the recluses of Port Royal, maintained a constant correspondence with M. de St. Cyran. The spiritual instructions they

derived from him, formed the basis of the advice they themselves gave to a numerous circle of religious persons, who had continual recourse to them. Thus, even during his confinement at Vincennes, M. de St. Cyran was the means of diffusing an enlightened piety over all France.

The time was now at hand, when the generosity and charity of these recluses, became as publicly known as the spirituality of their writings.

Cardinal Richelieu died in 1642. The death of Louis XIII. almost immediately succeeded to that of his minister. Louis XIV. came to the throne in 1643. He was not quite five years old. His mother, Anne of Austria, was appointed sole regent. She nominated the Cardinal Mazarin prime minister. This choice was equally odious to the nobility and the people. The latter found themselves oppressed by grievous taxes ; the former beheld with indignation, so large a share of power invested in a foreigner. A strong party was formed against him by the Duke de Beaufort, the Duke de la Rochefoucauld, and Cardinal de Retz. This powerful faction was headed by the Duchesse de Longueville, sister to the great Condé. This lady was equally celebrated for beauty, accomplishments, and, above all, for political intrigue. She soon gained over her husband, and her brother, the Prince of Conti. They exerted every endeavour, and used every means to render the royal party odious in the sight of the people. At length they succeeded in raising a revolt. The Queen, with the Prince and

minister, were compelled to flee from Paris. Troops were raised on both sides. Madame de Longueville now assumed the authority of a queen. She concerted means of placing the capital in a situation to stand a regular siege. This intrepid and enterprising Princess was not in the least dismayed, when she beheld the royal troops advance; and the capital, in which she commanded, blockaded on every side. Her brother, the great Prince of Condé, continued faithful to his allegiance. He led on the attack. The Princess of Longueville, neither mollified by the ties of blood, nor daunted by his military fame, as resolutely maintained the defence. Her spirit of intrigue, furnished resources against every exigency. At the solicitation of the rebels, Spain lent her assistance. The Archduke, governor of the Low Countries, was ready to pour into France 15,000 men. Gained by the united influence of the wit and beauty of Madame de Longueville, the great Turenne abandoned his duty. He took the field against his sovereign, and turned his arms against his native country. France was plunged into the horrors of a civil war. Violence, rapine, and desolation, spread over the whole country. Famine began to make its appearance. Misery and iniquity pervaded the land ; but above all, in the neighbourhood of the besieged capital, the sufferings were extreme.

Nor did religious houses escape the horrible ravages of a desolating war. Many of these seclusions were levelled to the ground.

The abbey of St. Cyran was ransacked ; and Port Royal itself threatened with a similar visitation. In this emergency, their friends advised them immediately to send the nuns to Paris, and themselves to take possession of the monastery, and to strengthen it by those fortifications, and to assume themselves that military garb, which might, under present circumstances, prove the most effectual mode of preventing an attack.

On this occasion, one of the recluses writes as follows : “ The day of St. Mark was chosen, for the translation of the community. Though so many years have passed away, I seem still to see the long procession of carriages driving from the door, and forming a long line down the avenue. I still remember the peace, silence, and good order, which marked this trying hour ; and seem yet to see the Mère Angélique presiding every where, and superintending the most minute details ; yet with that expression of uninterrupted peace and love which marked, that even whilst she was diligent in business, she was yet more fervent in spirit.

“ Scarcely had we watched the last carriage down the avenue, with fervent prayers for their preservation, than we immediately took possession of the abandoned monastery, and after removing into it all our furniture, we began to examine how far it would be possible to fortify it, so as to render its walls impervious to attack.

“ It was resolved to strengthen the walls, and to build a variety of small towers along them at

intervals, which should serve as strong-holds. Accordingly we all set to work, and in a very few days the whole aspect of the place was changed. Some were occupied in digging the foundations, others were busied in hewing stone, or in handling the trowel. From a solitude of prayer and meditation, Port Royal seemed suddenly transformed into a scene of hurry and activity. Her forests echoed to the harsh grating of the saw, or reverberated the reiterated stroke of the woodman's axe. Nevertheless, though the occupation was changed, the same spirit still pervaded every heart. Amidst the despatch of business, a heart watching to prayer was written on every countenance. Surrounded, externally, by the horrid alarms of war, an internal peace reigned in the soul, and whilst the hands were diligent in earthly concerns, the frequently uplifted eye shewed, that the conversation of every heart was indeed in heaven. And at the intervals of each stroke of the axe, the ear caught the songs of praise, with which the recluses beguiled their hours of labor. Often as I looked around, and as I contemplated my companions laboring in the midst of the forests which enclosed our seclusion, it brought to my mind the times of Esdras, when the people of God built the walls of Jerusalem, with the sword in one hand and the trowel in the other.

“ In the mean time, however, the danger became more pressing, and before the walls were completed, the peaceful inhabitants of our seclusion, were sheathed in military armour. Instead

of monastic solitude, Port Royal now exhibited three hundred warriors, armed cap-a-pee. Spears and helmets glittered amidst the dark recesses of her forests, and the din of arms was heard for the first time, in a retreat so eminently consecrated to prayer. Yet was not the character of its inhabitants changed. The same devotion reigned in their hearts, and though the occupation of their working hours was altered, those devoted to exercises of religion or of charity were never infringed on.

“ Yet I must own, that the striking contrast between the genuine occupations of the disciples of the Prince of Peace, and our present life, was painful. Scarcely had the pealing anthem ceased, when the harsh blast of the trumpet called us to assemble in arms. The forest, which had never echoed but to orisons, or hymns of praises, was now disturbed by the clash of arms, and the trampling of horses’ hoofs. The wood-pigeons, hares, squirrels, and other tribes of little animals, which were almost tame, from the undisturbed peace in which they lived, now started with fear at volleys of musquetry. I remember feeling particular pain, when, instead of closing our day with prayer, the deep thunders of the evening-gun re-echoed from the distant mountains ; and as its blue smoke dissipated itself over the dark and shagged forests, the awful grandeur of the scene, and perhaps some other secret emotion, used to fill my soul with deep melancholy. O ! blessed time, my heart said, when our strength was alone in the

arm of the Lord, and when without trusting to an arm of flesh, we securely rested under his shadow !

“ Yet surely arms were never wielded by hands more pure. Whilst their armour glittered to the sun, the gold and silver with which they were adorned, concealed the hair-cloth and the penitential shirt beneath ; and the plumes which towered over their martial fronts, hid the tear of compunction which flowed down their cheeks. Whilst the two-edged falchion glittered from their side, the hands that wielded it were solely occupied in pouring balm into the wounds of their afflicted countrymen. The voices which called to arms, were chiefly occupied in pouring forth the prayer of faith, or the thanksgivings of divine love, by the beds of the dying ; and the gaily caparisoned horses that seemed so eager for the field, were solely used in carrying food and raiment to the distressed. It was an awful sight to see, in the midst of these uncultured solitudes, this little troop at the moment the bell rung for prayer. In one instant every helmet was cast upon the ground, and with their heads uncovered, and their faces prostrate in the dust, a thousand hands cased in steel, were lifted in suppliant adoration. Thus under the external garb of war, these excellent men still served the Prince of Peace ; and whilst their hands seemed rough like those of Esau, their hearts and voice still remained those of Jacob. Yet I confess I deplored the fatal necessity by which the servants of God assumed even the appearance of evil ; and often as we buckled on our arms, we could not re-

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strain our tears and prayers to God, that he might be pleased to do away this direful necessity.

“Meanwhile our venerable minister, M. de Saci, had not been consulted on the steps which had been taken. He said but little, nevertheless, it was obvious that his heart mourned over us. However, he contented himself with being more than usual in retirement, and pouring out his heart in secret before God. Tranquil and recollected in the midst of alarms, his very aspect said to our hearts, that he trusted not in an arm of flesh, but in the power of the living God. And, in the midst of three hundred armed men, M. de Saci, unarmed, seemed a stronger defence to them than their united force, if exerted, would have been to Port Royal.

“M. de Saci united, in an eminent degree, prudence with faithfulness. His deep knowledge of the human heart, led him to see the danger of a departure, even in appearance, from the ways of God. Yet he still waited for the proper moment to speak, the moment at which their own experience should begin to corroborate the force of his words.

“Then, and not till then, he spoke. ‘My dear friends,’ would he say, ‘examine yourselves ; I will not say, prove your own selves, whether ye be still in the faith, but try whether you increase with the same increase as formerly, in the love and knowledge of God. The enemy of our souls, who is always going about seeking whom he may devour, is peculiarly active in these times of

external disorder and danger, when the soul is in an especial manner likely to be thrown off its guard. Now do you find, that whilst you practise your exercises of earthly warfare, that your heart is solely engaged in spiritual combats? Whilst you wield the arms of man, does your heart as fully and as singly as formerly depend on God alone for help? Now your minds are busy in contriving so many schemes of defence, are your hearts as completely resigned as formerly to whatever event it may please God to send? My dear friends, if we would obviate the effects of public disturbances, should we not do well to apply the remedy to their primary cause? Now, surely, the primary cause of public judgments can be no other than public sins. Whilst then we are endeavoring, by force of arms, to extirpate the branches, the baneful root still remains. O, my dear brethren, should we not be much more effectually serving our country by spreading the knowledge and love of the gospel, than by aiming at the defence of any particular spot, however consecrated? Amongst the multitudes who have taken up arms in this unhappy contest, how has the country been benefited? Believe me, we should be doing a greater service to our country, by setting an example of humbling ourselves before God, of confessing our sins, of walking in his precepts, of being resigned to his will, of trusting to his love, and therefore remaining at peace amidst all the horrors and alarms of war. Civil war is one of the most dreadful judgments

of God upon a guilty land. How is it possible that your minds should be taken up with temporal interests, when you ought to be solely occupied in seeking a restoration to the divine favor? And how can it be, that in the midst of so awful a judgment, that should only furnish you with amusement, which ought to be the cause of the deepest humiliation? I know, indeed, my brethren, what human laws allow in such cases, nay, what the great law of nature, the desire of self-preservation, universally recognizes. But, my dear friends, we are in a peculiar manner, under divine and not human laws; we are under obedience, not to nature, but to grace. Remember, my dear brethren, the day you each consecrated yourselves to God. If you did not then resolve to follow the Captain of your salvation, who was made perfect through sufferings, and if you did not intend to have fellowship with him in those sufferings, even to death, you are not worthy of him. O! my brethren, how little did I expect when I received your vows, to behold these very altars, where you pronounced them, venerable by their antiquity, and by the successive generations of saints who have for centuries surrounded them, imbrued and defiled, for so they are, even by the mere semblance of blood and carnage. The horrors of war are ever dreadful to the christian mind; but surely this is as that abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel, when that which is unclean, shall even defile the holy places and the temple of the Most High.'

“Such were the sentiments of our reverend pastor. Nor did his children need to have them twice repeated. Though the judgment had erred, the heart had remained pure. Arms were banished Port Royal. The nuns returned to their monastery, We resumed our former occupations, and Port Royal became, as heretofore, an house solely dedicated to prayer and praise.”

Meanwhile the horrors of war raged all around with redoubled fury. Pillage and assassination desolated the country on every hand. Incendiaries and marauding parties laid waste the produce of the land, and famine and pestilence depopulated the cities.

In this hour of exigency, the inhabitants of Port Royal proved the guardian angels of the land. This hospitable seclusion became an asylum to the distressed. Their whole attention was turned to assist their unhappy country. Several hundred persons were every day supplied with food from this monastery. Multitudes of sick and wounded were attended by the recluses. They visited every part of the district, to relieve the wants of the inhabitants, and to preach peace and concord. Their houses were crowded with persons, who sought an asylum from the tempest. Many of their most bitter enemies were entertained at Port Royal, during all the time of the siege. The whole of the monastic inclosure was crowded with the effects which their poor neighbours brought there, as to a place of safety. The Rev. Abbess Angélique writes in the following

terms, to one of her friends : “ We are all occupied in contriving soups and pottage for the poor. This is, indeed, an awful time. Our gentlemen, as they were taking their rounds yesterday, found two persons starved to death ; and met with a young woman on the very point of killing her child, because she had no food for it. All is pillaged around ; corn-fields are trampled over by the cavalry, in presence of the starving owners ; despair has seized all whose confidence is not in God ; no one will any longer plough or dig ; there are no horses indeed, left for the former ; nor if there were, is any person certain of reaping what he sows ; all is stolen.

“ Perhaps I shall not be able to send you a letter to-morrow, for all our horses and asses are dead with hunger. O how little do princes know the detailed horrors of war ! All the provender of the beasts we were obliged to divide, between ourselves and the starving poor. We concealed as many of the peasants, and of their cattle, as we could in our monastery, to save them from being murdered, and losing all their substance. Our dormitory and the chapter-house were full of horses. We were almost stifled, by being pent up with these beasts. But we could not resist the piercing lamentations of the starving and heart-broken poor. In the cellar were concealed forty cows. Our court-yards and out-houses are stuffed full of fowls, turkeys, ducks, geese, and asses. The church is piled up to the ceiling with corn, oats, beans, and peas ; and with caldrons,

kettles, and other things belonging to the cottagers. Every time we enter the chapel, we are obliged to scramble over sacks of flour, and all sorts of rubbish. The floor of the choir is completely covered with the libraries of our gentlemen. Thirty or forty nuns, from other convents, have fled here too for refuge. Our laundry is thronged by the aged, the blind, the maimed, the halt, and infants. The infirmary is full of sick and wounded. We have torn up all our rags and linen clothes to dress their sores. We have no more, and are now at our wits' ends. The cold is excessive, and all our fire-wood is consumed. We dare not go into the fields for any more, as they are full of marauding parties. We hear that the abbey of St. Cyran has been burnt and pillaged. Our own is threatened with an attack every day. The cold weather alone preserves us from pestilence. We are so closely crowded, that deaths happen continually ; God, however, is with us, and we are in peace."

Such is war ! How impossible does it appear that any christian should be engaged in it ! How wonderful that the perpetrators of such horrors should be so deluded, as to imagine themselves amongst the children of the God of love !

Port Royal continued to be distinguished for its charity, during the whole period of the war.

CHAP. VI.

Causes of Enmity against Port Royal.— Combination of the Court and Jesuits against it.—Singular event by which it was quelled.

A SOCIETY, such as Port Royal, could not be long without experiencing the truth of their divine master's declaration, that all who live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution. In all ages, as in that of the primitive church, the introduction of the gospel is like bringing a sword on earth, dividing between the good and bad.

At the first institution of the reform at Port Royal, the M. Angélique had experienced some degree of opposition. Whilst the excellent of her order availed themselves of so bright an example, those who remained unconverted from the error of their ways, counted her life madness, and her undertaking to be without hope.

The recluses had not escaped a share of the same aspersions.

M. le Maitre's conversion took place in 1638, just before the imprisonment of M. de St. Cyran, and the death of Jansenius. They shared in a

measure the persecution of their friends. Two months after the recluses first arrived at Port Royal, they had been compelled to flee from the researches of Cardinal Richelieu. They escaped to La Ferté Milon—there they lived concealed for some months. After the storm was blown over, they again returned to Port Royal.

These pages are rather intended as a compendious explanation of the nature of the institution of Port Royal, than as an history of the persecutions, by which it was at length destroyed.

It may suffice briefly to observe, that many causes conspired to render the Jesuits inimical to this institution. These causes may, perhaps, be referred to three general heads : their enmity to M. de St. Cyran, the grounds of which are elsewhere related ; their jealousy of the growing celebrity of a society, which already eclipsed their own in literary fame,—a society which already outshone them in academical institutions, and which threatened to do so in spiritual direction. Thirdly, they were actuated by a determined animosity against the family of Arnauld, the motives of which were as follows :

The grandfather of the M. Angélique had been the most eminent advocate of his day. He was employed by the university of Paris, in an important cause against the Jesuits. He gained his suit. Besides this, a more recent cause of offence took place.

The strict morality and ascetic habits of the Jansenists, had been long interpreted as a silent

reflection on the lax principles of the casuists. A publication of Dr. Arnauld's aggravated their displeasure. He published a work on frequent communion, deploring the levity with which too many persons approach that sacred mystery. He spoke of the necessity of producing genuine fruits of repentance, before the seed of a living faith can be implanted. He urged the necessity of a real cessation from sin, and an heart-felt desire to relinquish evil, previous to absolution. He concluded by observing, that no repentance could be termed evangelical, whilst it arose solely from a fear of punishment, unmixed with a true love of God. The whole work was supported by ample quotations from the Scriptures, and the Fathers of the church.

This book created considerable alarm amongst the Jesuits. The chief object of their society was, to obtain unlimited power by a very extensive spiritual direction. They especially coveted to guide the consciences of men in power. In this aim, their success was proportioned to their assiduity. There were very few princes on the throne, nobles in the realm, dignitaries in the church, or religious houses belonging to any order, which were not, either directly or remotely, under their influence. Amidst so considerable a multitude of the great and powerful, there were many who, whilst they wished not to lose heaven, were yet resolved to continue in sin. Their ghostly fathers were hence reduced to the alternative either of wholly breaking with them, or of finding out some

accommodating system of morality, by which they might at once retain their influence, and yet in a measure save appearances, as it respected their own spiritual reputation. To this end they had framed their celebrated system of casuistic morality.

A work could not then be acceptable, the very object of which was, to tear away every refuge of lies. Should M. Arnauld succeed in establishing the doctrine of penitence, they could only have a choice of two evils. Either their reputation for piety would sink for not requiring it ; then their direction would not be sought : or else, if they did exact rigorous penance, they well knew that the bulk of their flock would instantly quit them for milder pastors.

In this difficulty, nothing remained but to brand M. Arnauld and his work with heresy. The extensive direction of the Jesuits gave them a very wide influence, especially over the consciences of the great. It began to be every where rumoured, and especially at court, that a new heresy was sprung up. That unless Port Royal was extirpated, the most heavy judgments, and the most signal strokes of divine vengeance, would speedily overwhelm the land.

The Sorbonne, and all the Gallican clergy were appealed to by the Jesuits. Rome itself was applied to, respecting M. Arnauld's work.

Our Lord has declared, that the world will love its own. A decision was accordingly given, such as might have been expected. The Jansenists were condemned.

In February, 1656, the Jesuits obtained in the Sorbonne, a censure of Father Cornet's five propositions. These celebrated propositions, it may be remembered, had been artfully framed by the Jesuits, and were pretended to be extracted from the *Augustinus* of Jansenius. They were not, however, contented by the honors of a triumph. They resolved to reap some substantial fruit of their victory. The Jesuits had long termed the little schools of Port Royal, the seminaries of Jansenism, and hot-bed of heresy. They now obtained an order from government, to abolish them. The officers of the police, accompanied by a troop of archers, were sent to Port Royal des Champs, where they made a list of the schools. They then proceeded to each, and immediately turned out all the masters and scholars, and sent all the recluses away from Port Royal des Champs, on pain of imprisonment.

Immediately after, an order of council was signed against the nuns. It was resolved, that every scholar, postulant, and novice, should be turned out of both the houses of Port Royal. This decree had been given : it was on the point of being carried into execution, when, by a most extraordinary circumstance, a stop was put to the whole persecution. The bare mention of this incident cannot be omitted, because it forms an important epocha in the history of the institution. That its truth was equally believed by the friends, and allowed by the enemies of Port Royal, is undoubted ; and it was unquestionably this belief

which arrested the arm of the secular power. It disarmed the vengeance of a powerful and despotic monarch ; it stayed the thunders of the Vatican ; and it turned the tide of opinion of a whole nation. The reader who may be curious to examine the various authorities and evidence on which this circumstance rests, is referred to *Besogne, Clemen-
cet, Gilbert, Perrier, Pascal, Necrologe, Manuel de
Port Royal* ; also, *Histoire du Miracle de la sainte
Epine, voyez le 3eme tom. des Memoires de Fontaine,
Notes de Nicole au 4me tom. des Lettres Provin-
ciales. Racine, Histoire abregée de Port Royal.
Choiseul Memoires sur la Religion. Attestations des
Grands Vicaires de Paris sur la Miracle de la Sainte
Epine.* This circumstance is so numerously at-
tested by eye-witnesses, of such unsuspected piety,
and distinguished intelligence, that no person
who admits the possibility of miraculous interpo-
sitions, can doubt it. On the other hand, it is so
extraordinary, and so opposite to the operations of
nature, that no one who disbelieves in occasional
supernatural interpositions, can possibly admit it.

The circumstance alluded to, was a miraculous
cure, said to be operated on the niece of the great
Pascal. He had, some years previously, made a
decidedly religious profession, but his health hav-
ing suffered from severe mental exertion, his
medical friends advised relaxation ; this was the
unfortunate occasion of his total relapse into the
world. The cure of his niece put the final stroke
to his vacillations. He became truly converted.
He was deeply impressed by the circumstances,

and wore ever after a seal, the device of which was a crown of thorns, from which emanated rays of light. Underneath was this motto : “ I know in whom I have believed. *Scio cui credidi.*”

Many persons having expressed a wish that an account of this cure had been given in the last edition, we here insert a literal translation of one of the numerous accounts ; we give it without note or comment. It may excite interest as being the circumstance which suggested to Pascal, his intention of writing a work on miracles, which he accordingly began ; when his death interrupted the design. The memoranda he had made, were collected by his friends and published, by the well known name of “ *Pensées de Pascal,*” or Pascal’s Thoughts.

Account of the Cure of Pascal’s Niece, from Dom. Clemencet’s History of Port Royal. Vol. iii. pp. 367—393.^a

Marguerite Perrier, daughter of M. Perrier, counsellor in the Court of Aides, of Clermont, and of Gilberte Pascal, sister of the celebrated M. Blaise Pascal, was placed at Port Royal, with her

^a Several persons having expressed an opinion, that the curiosity of this circumstance depended on the number and the character of those attesting it, we have thought it best to comply with their wishes, and have given other original accounts, in the Notes at the end of the book, viz., those of the celebrated Nicole, whose aunt was Abbess at the time ; that of Fontaine, and others, recluses at Port Royal.

eldest sister in 1653, by their mother ; who made it her earnest endeavour to bestow on her children a christian education.

God was pleased to manifest his works and his power in the person of this child. He permitted her to be afflicted, during three years and a half, with a fistula lachrymalis, in the corner of the left eye. This fistula, which was very large externally, had made great ravages within. The bones of the nose became carious, and were perforated to the palate ; so that the discharge, which was continual, ran down her cheeks and nostrils, and sometimes even into the throat. Her eye was considerably diminished, and the parts around so diseased, that to touch her head on that side caused great pain. It was impossible to look at her without shuddering ; and the discharge from the ulcer was so intolerably offensive, that the surgeons recommended her being separated from the other boarders in the convent ; she was accordingly placed in a separate chamber, with one companion much older than herself, who from motives of christian charity, undertook to remain with her. All the most celebrated oculists, surgeons, and operators, were consulted ; but their remedies only served to irritate the disorder. Fearing the ulcer would extend itself over the whole face ; three of the most eminent surgeons of Paris, Cressé, Guillard, and Dalencé, advised the actual cautery ; without at the same time, however, affording much hope of a cure. In short, her state was so deplorable and so hopeless,

that whenever she was spoken of before Madame d'Aumont, (Sœur Euphémie Pascal, M. Pascal's sister, relates in her second letter to Madame Perrier,) she wished for her death, to end her sufferings ; and whenever miracles were mentioned, she said, that if this disorder were to be cured, it would be indeed a miracle. The opinion of the surgeons was sent to M. Perrier, the child's father, who immediately set out to be present at the operation, and was daily expected.

It was at this period the storm was ready to burst on Port Royal ; certain intelligence was received, that a council was to be held before the king, to determine on the dispersion of the nuns. The news was received on Monday, the 20th of March, the third week in lent ; and it was added, that the list of their names, and of the places of their exile, had been seen on the queen's toilette.

Intelligence so circumstantial, of which no doubt could be entertained, having filled Port Royal with apprehension, the Mère des Anges, (aunt to the celebrated Nicole,) who was then abbess, felt severely the meditated blow ; and resorted to prayer to avert the anger of God. " My daughter, (said she to Sœur Candide,) we must leave every thing, to devote ourselves to turn away the displeasure of God ; for if God has not mercy on us, the house is lost ; the council is to be held to determine on our dispersion, and that is certain. We must avert this evil, by imploring day and night the mercy of God. I am

going to continue three days and three nights, in constant prayer ; I shall spend these days in the tribune, before the holy sacrament, which I warn you of, that you may not be uneasy, or suffer me to be interrupted." She began her retirement on the Tuesday, from which she only desisted to take her meals, and which she resumed immediately ; after which she continued till nine at night, when Sœur Candide prevailed on her to go to rest, but she had hardly entered her bed, when she again arose, and passed a part of the night in prayer.

On the morrow, Mlle. Tardieu called at Port Royal, and told Sœur Magdeleine des Anges de Druy, that M. de la Poterie, (an ecclesiastic of fortune and piety, who had with great pains made a collection of holy relics,) had a holy thorn, which he had exhibited to all the communities of the fauxbourg, and that if she approved, she would bring it to her the next day. The Sœur Magdeleine, having repeated to the Mère des Anges what Mlle. Tardieu had said, she desired her to thank Mlle. Tardieu, and M. de la Poterie, adding that the house was not in a situation to permit them to have the consolation of seeing that holy relic ; that they could only think of prayer and supplication before God. Sœur Magdeleine des Anges was rather mortified, and made no reply ; but went to the Mère Agnès, who answered, that since the abbess had not thought it proper, it must not be done ; that it was true they were not in circumstances to admit of gratification : whereon Sœur Magdeleine replied, that

if it was brought, to be exposed on the Friday, at the prayer of the passion, it would occasion no distraction. The Mère Agnès having approved of the proposal, told her to speak to the abbess, who consented, telling her, that it should only be carried during the hour, that no one should regard it from curiosity. The Sœur Magdeleine wrote immediately to M. de la Poterie, to request him to send the holy relic : it was brought the 24th of March, 1656, which fell out that year on Friday, the third week in lent ; a day on which the church sings, at the introduction of the mass, these words of the 85th psalm :^a “ *Fac mecum signum in bonum, et viderant odio habentes me, et pudore afficiantur, quod tu Domine, adjuveris me, et consolatus fueris me.*” (In our version, Psalm lxxxvi. v. 17.)


For three days, the Mère des Anges had remained in a kind of retreat ; where she continued night and day to lift her hands to heaven, no hope being left of help from men. But it was the moment when the interference of heaven was to be shewn for her, and her community. The nuns having received the thorn, placed it on a little altar in the choir, and the community had notice to attend a procession, to be made after vespers in honor of it. Vespers being finished,

^a “ O turn unto me, and have mercy upon me ; give thy strength unto thy servant, and save the son of thine handmaid,

“ Shew me a token for good, that they which hate me may see it and be ashamed, because thou, Lord, hast holpen me and comforted me.”—*Psalm lxxxvi. v 16, 17.*

hymns were sung, and prayers made, suited to the mysteries of our Lord's passion. After which, they each, according to their rank, kissed the sacred relic, first the nuns, then the novices, afterwards the boarders. When it came to the turn of the little Perrier, Sœur Flavie Passart, mistress of the novices, who had placed herself near the grille to see these children pass, having perceived her, could not see her so disfigured without horror, mingled with compassion ; and said to her : “ Recommend yourself to God my child, and touch your bad eye with the holy thorn,” and she herself, says the Sœur Euphémie Pascal, took the holy relic, and applied it without reflection ; having all retired, they returned it to M. de la Poterie.


In the evening, the Sœur Flavie, who thought no more of what she had done, heard little Perrier say to one of her little sisters : “ My sister, I have no longer any thing the matter with me, the holy thorn has cured me ;” in fact, the Sœur Flavie, on going near, found her left eye, that which had been diseased, quite well, and not in the least differing from the other ; although before it was in a state that was painful to behold. The cure was so perfect, that the Sœur Euphémie, her aunt, speaking of the disorder and of the cure, says in her letter, that it would now require a much larger measure of faith, in those who have not seen it, to believe she ever had the disease ; than in those who had seen it, to believe she had been cured in a moment, by a miracle, as great and as



visible, as restoring sight to the blind. The Sœur Euphémie adds, that in addition to her eye, she had several other ailments connected with it ; she was unable to sleep ; she had two places in her head, where she could not bear the comb ; it was only two days since, that looking at her disorder brought tears in her eyes, and the smell was very offensive. At present there are no more remains of it, than if it had never existed. This miracle took place at three o'clock in the afternoon, as related by the Sœur Euphémie ; the hour when Jesus Christ, at his death, bestowed a miraculous power on the instruments of his passion. It may be readily imagined, what publicity would have been given to such an astonishing event, had it taken place in any other convent than Port Royal ; and what pains would have been taken, to inform the whole community ; nevertheless, because it was the hour of silence, and that hour was more strictly observed during lent, than at any other time, and that the house was then in a deeper state of devotional meditation, than in general, these two young girls retired to their chamber, and went to bed, without saying a word of what had happened. The only person to whom it was known, was the Sœur Flavie ; who told it solely to the abbess, from whom the Sœur Euphémie Pascal, the aunt of the child who had been cured, learnt it on the following day. On that day, one of the nuns employed about the boarders, came to comb little Perrier ; and being fearful of hurting her, she very carefully touched

the left side of her head ; but the child told her, “ My sister, the holy thorn has cured me ! ” “ How, my sister, you are cured ? ” “ Look and see,” she replied. In fact the nun examined, and saw that she was entirely cured. She went to inform the abbess, who came and gave thanks to God, for this wonderful manifestation of his power. But she did not think it prudent to make it publicly known, persuaded, that under the present unfavorable disposition of society towards their house, they should above all things avoid being made the subject of conversation in the world.

Notwithstanding the reserve of the nuns, the miracle could not remain concealed ; and God who had wrought it, to justify the innocence and purity of faith, of these christian virgins who were decried, soon rendered it public. M. Dalencé, who had seen the child Perrier under the disease, came to Port Royal on the 11th of March, six or seven days after she was cured ; she was brought to him without saying a word. He began to examine her minutely, he pressed her eye, passed a probe into the nose, and was very much astonished to find nothing of the complaint. He was asked if he did not remember the disorder he had seen ? he answered very simply, “ It is what I am seeking, but I can no longer find it.” Sœur Euphémie Pascal begged him to examine her mouth, which he did, and introduced his probe, and found so little amiss, that he began to laugh, and said, “ Here is nothing at all the matter ; ” on which



Sœur Flavie related to him every thing that had passed. He made her repeat it more than once, for he was a remarkably cautious, prudent man, and after having listened patiently and attentively, he asked if it went away immediately, and the child having answered that it did, he said he would, whenever called on, give his attestation, that it was impossible to have taken place but by a miracle.

M. Dalencé, in fact, gave his attestation with several of the most famous physicians and surgeons, who were acquainted with the case. The physicians were Charles Bonoard, (first physician to the king,) Jean Hamon, and Isaac Eusebe Renaudot; the surgeons were Pierre Cressé, Martin Dalencé, and Etienne Guillard. These gentlemen say, in their attestation of the 14th of April, “They have seen several times, together and separate, the child Mlle. Marguerite Perrier; who they found afflicted, during three years and a half, with an œgilops; or lachrymal fistula, in the left eye, the size of a nut.

“The sanious matter discharging from the eye, the nose, and the palate, was so offensive and foetid, as to oblige her to be separated from the other boarders. She had been attended and dressed for eighteen months, without any favorable symptoms; the disorder constantly growing worse; when having renewed their visits, after an interval of three weeks, with the symptoms as related, they were ready to apply the last remedy, (the cautery jointly and separately,) they found

her, as they do at present, perfectly cured ; not only of the lachrymal fistula, but the carious bone, the foetid discharge, and the accessories inseparable from the disorder : and since this cure, thus wrought in an instant, in a malady of such importance, cannot but be deemed extraordinary, in whatever way it is regarded ; they esteem it to surpass the ordinary powers of nature ; and could only be brought about by a miracle, and which they hereby declare to be one.”

The father of the child, says M. du Fossé, who had been sent for from Auvergne, to be present at the operation M. Dalencé was to have performed on the eye of his daughter, was the person who was most instrumental in giving general publicity to this miracle ; for finding her cured on his arrival in Paris, he was so transported with joy, that having assembled the physicians and surgeons, and received from them an attestation, that the cure could be attributed solely to an interposition of the divine power ; he united his voice with theirs, in proclaiming this miraculous cure, which was known throughout Paris, and believed even by the whole court.

The Queen-mother, felt at first perplexed at the news of this miracle ; which was spread to Compiègne, where the court then resided. She felt a difficulty in believing that God had given such a peculiar mark of favor to a house, which had been for a long time described to her as infected with heresy ; and that this miracle, of which she had heard so much, was wrought on the person of

one of the boarders in that house : as if God had willed to shew the divine approbation of the education given to youth in that house. The Queen did not rest satisfied, either in the letters which were written to her by several pious persons, or in the common report, nor even in the attestations of the surgeons of Paris ; she sent M. Felix, (the king's first surgeon,) to the spot ; a man generally esteemed for his proficiency in the art, and for singular integrity, charging him to render her a faithful account of all that related to this miracle. M. Felix acquitted himself with great exactitude of his commission : he interrogated the nuns and the surgeons ; made them describe to him the first appearance, the progress, and the termination of the disorder ; he examined the patient attentively, and at last declared, that neither the powers of nature, or the remedies used, had any share in performing this cure, which could only be the work of God.

That nothing should be wanting to establish the authenticity of this miracle ; it pleased God it should be verified by the Grands Vicaires of the Archbishop of Paris. These gentlemen, excited by the voice of the public, commenced about the end of May, taking regular informations respecting this miracle ; which were continued in June following, and again in October. The miracle was verified by M. Hodencq, Grand Vicaire, and Official, who was curé and arch-priest of St. Severin.

We learn the following, on this important subject, from a letter dated October 24, 1656, from, Sœur Euphémie Pascal to Madame Perrier : “ It is now eight or ten days since little Perrier has been examined judicially, by the official surgeons, in presence of M. le grand vicaire and official, (M. Hodencq) ; in consequence of which she has been made to go out with her sister, in a secular habit, and he has since pronounced his sentence. I know not if this may be called approbation, or verification of the miracle. We intend in consequence, God willing, to sing a solemn Te Deum, on Friday next, with a mass of thanksgiving. The little Perrier will be in the church without, with a lighted taper ; then we shall endeavor to shew forth in part, the gratitude which God has diffused in our hearts.” Thus far Dom Clemencet.

As memorialists of Port Royal, it became our duty, to record an account which one class of readers will deem absolutely incredible ; since it wholly contradicts the established laws of nature ; whilst to others it may, perhaps, appear equally impossible, that such men as Pascal, Nicole, Tillemont, Du Fossé, and Fontaine, should either publish a deliberate falsehood, or be deceived as to a plain matter of fact, obvious to the senses, and relating to one with whom they were in habits of daily intercourse.

Whatever opinion may be entertained, as to the mode by which this cure was wrought, one thing is certain. An attestation of the fact was

obtained, from the very officers who had received the orders for persecution. The first surgeons in Paris were examined, upon oath. Port Royal was thronged for many weeks, by persons who went to ascertain the truth of their deposition. The consequence was, that Port Royal was freed from any further persecution. The storm was hushed for a season ; the recluses gradually returned ; and the valley of Port Royal des Champs flourished as before.

Though deprived of its schools, the solitude extended its usefulness, if possible, more than ever. Its fame had been increased by persecution, and its piety was venerated, from the patience with which that persecution had been endured. Numbers came to visit Port Royal, from religious motives. Many, whose duties still retained them in the world, yet wished to profit by the pious example of this society. They came to retire there for a season, conforming to the rules of the institution whilst they stayed, and keeping up a constant correspondence with its members, when they were absent. Multitudes of persons of this description, placed themselves under the direction of Port Royal. Conversions without number were daily made. The Queen of Poland, the Princesse Guimenée, the Dukes and Duchesses of Luynes, Liancourt, and Pontchâteau, the Marquisses of Sevigné and Sablé, were but a very small portion of the multitudes who annually retired there, and who edified the world by an upright and godly conversation.

There was, at this time, two hundred and fifty stated inhabitants of Port Royal des Champs, including both the nuns and recluses. The number of those who were under their direction, and who occasionally retired there, amounted to several hundreds.

CHAP. VII.

*Remarkable Conversion of Madame de Longueville.—
Renewed persecution.—Letter of Madame de
Brégy.—The M. Angélique.*

AT this period a conversion took place, which astonished France. It ought to have convinced their enemies of the real piety of the Jansenists. It would no doubt have done so, had they attended to our Lord's rule, to judge of the tree by its fruits.

Madame de Longueville, that haughty princess, whose beauty, whose wit, and whose talents, had hitherto been made subservient to the most boundless ambition ; that same person, who plunged her country into the horrors of a civil war, to gratify her own disappointed pride ; that heroine, who had so long withstood the great Condé, Madame de Longueville, became suddenly an altered character. She visited Port Royal. Her schemes of dominion were renounced ; the haughty intrepidity of her manner disappeared ; her restless and perturbed spirit became calm and peace-

ful. She brought with her the Prince and Princess of Conti, her brother and sister, and introduced them at Port Royal. The same change was soon perceptible in them. They deplored, with bitter tears, the widely extended evils their ambition had occasioned. The immense revenues they had expended, in maintaining a degree of state more than royal, was now wholly devoted to charity.

Their houses, retinue, and equipage, became marked with strict economy. Their princely revenues were poured, with ample munificence, into the bosom of those whose fortunes had been injured by the civil war. They did not refuse to make the most humiliating and public acknowledgments of their guilt. Nor did they ever afterwards spend more than was absolutely needful for themselves; till, after a lapse of many years, all the provinces injured by the war, had been fully indemnified by their princely donations.

So splendid an example of the principles instilled at Port Royal, ought to have disarmed the malice of its enemies, and silenced their clamors. It had, however, precisely the contrary effect. It only fomented their envy, and strengthened their resolution to conspire its utter ruin.

In 1660, a second formulary was obtained by the Jesuits, an account of which has been given in the article Jansenius. It was framed by the archbishop of Thoulouse. Not only all the clergy, but all schoolmasters, and all the members of religious houses, even nuns, were required to give

their signatures. Four of the bishops refused their approbation, viz. :—the bishops of Alet, Pamiers, Angers, and Beauvais. The Jansenists too, unanimously refused their subscription. The recluses alleged the celebrated distinction between the duty of submission in matters of faith, and matters of fact. The nuns declared, that the work of Jansenius being in latin, it was impossible they could decide on oath, upon the contents of a book they could not even read. It might have been reasonably supposed, that this excuse would have been sufficient. It proved, however, the signal of immediate persecution.

The novices and scholars were directly expelled from Port Royal des Champs, and the directors and confessors banished. The lieutenant of the police, with a troop of horse, was sent to visit both houses. M. Singlin, M. Arnauld, M. de St. Marthe, and M. Saci, were obliged to flee for the preservation of their lives.

At this period, the M. Angélique, exhausted by a persecution of more than five and twenty years, was on her death bed.

She had spent the winter at Port Royal des Champs, in a feeble and languishing state of health, having never recovered a very severe illness, which had attacked her the summer before.

For a very considerable time past, she had exhorted her nuns to prepare themselves, by a continual state of watchfulness and prayer, for the tribulation and persecution, she had long foreseen they would have to encounter.


It was in Easter week that she was apprised of the violent measures, which had been resolved upon against Port Royal de Paris.

Notwithstanding her advanced age, her great infirmities, and her peculiar attachment to the retired monastery of Port Royal des Champs, she immediately sent word to M. Agnès, then abbess, that if the community of Paris judged her presence to be necessary at so important a juncture, she was ready immediately to set out.

Accordingly, this step being considered advisable by the other house, she immediately prepared to be transported there in a litter.

This took place on the twenty-third of April, 1661. Before her departure, she assembled the whole community of Port Royal des Champs, and took leave of them with equal affection and firmness. The force and earnestness of her exhortations to constancy, the detailed advices how to act, under a variety of circumstances, the deep feeling she manifested in taking leave of each, and the awful seriousness with which she charged each to prove faithful to the end, sufficiently informed them, that she, like St. Paul, when he took leave of his beloved Ephesian disciples, never expected to see their faces more.

Having bade them farewell, as she crossed the court of the monastery, she met her brother, M. Arnauld d'Andilly, who was at that time one of the recluses of Port Royal, and who was waiting to bid her adieu. As he helped her into the carriage, she said, "Farewell, brother, be of good



cheer." M. d'Andilly having answered, "Never fear, sister, my courage is perfectly firm and undismayed!" She made him this memorable reply, "My dear brother, let us be humble; let us remember, that if humility without constancy is vilely casting away the impenetrable shield of faith; that courage, without deep self-distrust, is that ungodly presumption and pride, which cometh before a fall."

The M. Angélique had scarcely proceeded five or six miles, when she met an ecclesiastic coming from the house at Paris to Port Royal des Champs, sent to inform her that the lieutenant of the police had just been to their house at Paris, where he had taken down a list of the names of all the scholars, in order to expel them by the royal command. The abbess answered with her wonted calmness, "Well, sir, under every circumstance, God be praised! I will request the favor of you to go on to inform my sisters, whom I have just left, of this intelligence; and to tell them not to let their minds be troubled, but to let their hearts be fixed, trusting in the Lord."

Then, turning to her companions in the coach, she said, "My sisters, God has promised that all things shall work together for good to those who love God, hence they have reason to praise him, and to thank him, for all things, and at all times; let us now then join together to say the 'Te Deum;'" which they accordingly immediately did.

On her arrival, the M. Angélique found the street thronged by an immense concourse of

people, the gates of the monastery closely guarded by centinels, and the courts full of armed detachments of the police ; and on being taken out of her litter, she was carried into the house between files of archers.

She found the whole community in tears and lamentation. Her presence, however, restored some degree of calmness. “ How ! my dear sisters,” said she, “ I do believe you are weeping ! have you then no faith ? you have God, and yet fear the loss of any thing else ! believe me ; fear God, and him only, and all will go well.”

Then pausing, she raised her eyes to heaven, and with clasped hands, and a look at once of the most fervent devotion, and deepest and tenderest commiseration, she exclaimed, “ My God, have pity on us, thy children ! vouchsafe to bestow upon us all that grace, which may enable us from our very hearts to say, Father, thy holy will be done !”

From this day, however, the whole house became a scene of lamentation and weeping ; and the whole monastic inclosure resounded with the sobs and cries of thirty-three children, and several young girls, already received into the noviciate, and who awaited the mandate of their expulsion, as though it had been a death-warrant.

The M. Angélique, who had as much tenderness and affection for these children, as if they had been her own ; felt her heart rent by the pain of this cruel separation. But that to which she was most acutely sensible, was their being

taken away, to be placed in scenes, which would expose them to the contagion of the world.

At every hour of the day they were coming, one after the other, to take leave of her, sobbing and shrieking with despair ; whilst she, on the contrary, consoled and exhorted them to resignation and constancy.

This mournful scene was prolonged during eight days ; as several of the parents lived in the country, and could not reach Paris to take away their children sooner. The grief of these poor children was so great, that the nun who was their mistress, could scarcely prevail upon herself to go into the room. As soon as ever she appeared, they threw themselves in a crowd upon her, weeping, and holding fast by her clothes, and beseeching her to take pity upon them, and let them stay. Little ones of twelve years old, earnestly entreated to be received as novices, that they might stay. Several of them besought their parents to let them be lay-sisters, as the servants were still permitted to remain. Some of them were two days without eating, and all of them passed whole nights in tears. The grief of the parents, who came to fetch them, was in several instances not much less than that of the children : some of them were so affected, that they fainted on the spot. They probably felt this persecution against so holy an institution, as an awful sign of the times.

The departure of the scholars was not concluded, when a new order came, to expel all the postulants and novices.

This totally unexpected stroke, was peculiarly severe to the M. Angélique. All these novices gave hopes of the most sincere and fervent piety ; and the abbess, as well as themselves, felt unutterable pain at seeing them plunged again into the world, which they had renounced for ever.

There were three of these young people especially, for whom she cherished, if possible, a yet more peculiar tenderness. These were the two ladies de Luynes, daughters to the Duc de Luynes, and Mlle. de Bagnols. The M. Angélique had educated them herself, and they had been in the monastery almost from the cradle. They all gave promise of the most exalted piety, nor could she forget the fervent earnestness, with which their venerable parents had recommended them to her care, nor the solemn and repeated charges they had laid upon her, beseeching her to do all that in her lay, to make them worthy of being consecrated to God in her monastery.

The young people were now fully grown up : they had exceeded her most sanguine hopes, they were now on the point of assuming the dress, and had been awaiting the day with the most anxious impatience.

The moment of the departure of these beloved disciples being now at hand, the M. Angélique, whose faith had hitherto supported her, felt her wonted firmness at once fail : her heart was rent within her, and wrung with anguish ; when suddenly raising up her eyes to heaven, she knelt down, and addressed herself aloud to God, for

faith to support her in that trying hour. Then rising, she, with a steady step and firm eye, conducted them herself to the outside door, where the Duchesse de Chevrêuse, their sister-in-law, was waiting in her carriage for the young ladies. She could not help complimenting the M. Angélique on her fortitude ; “ Madame,” replied the venerable saint, “ there is a God who seeth in heaven, and whilst he is, I put in him my trust.” A reply, truly worthy of the sister of the great Arnauld. It is, indeed, very similar to one he made many years after, to Nicole : they had been hunted from place to place, on account of their religious publications. Arnauld wishing Nicole to assist him in a new work, the latter observed, “ We are now old, is it not time to rest ?” “ Rest !” returned Arnauld, “ Have we not all eternity to rest in ?”

The young ladies appeared quite overcome with grief, when the M. Angélique, tenderly embracing the eldest of Mademoiselles de Luynes, said to her firmly, “ Farewell, my very dear daughter, hope thou in God, and put thy confidence in him ! As for ourselves, we shall assuredly meet again ; and meet in that blessed land, where no power of man shall ever part us more.”

Nor was this the only instance amongst her postulants and novices, which was deeply afflicting to the M. Angélique ; she was especially touched by the case of one young person, the daughter of ungodly parents, who had been received on charity. This girl had such a fear of

going out of the house, where she had found salvation, and mixing with the profane associates in her own family, that she was taken very alarmingly ill, and her death was a long time expected.

Another, who was already a novice, and who had been under circumstances of peculiar obligation to Port Royal, never would quit her novice's dress ; and during the remainder of her life, though her parents were much in the world, she always wore it, and always pursued her religious exercises and acts of charity ; saying to the world who interrogated her on so singular a conduct, " I am a nun of Port Royal, nor can I forget my Zion, though in a land of strangers."

Another young postulant, who came for a choir nun, became postulant as a lay-sister, or servant, rather than go. After the persecution was over, the abbess having offered her the rank of choir nun, this pious girl refused, saying she was too much attached to the situation, in which God had already blessed her.

Thus were seventy-five persons, including scholars, novices, and postulants, at once expelled, by an unjust persecution, from the asylum of Port Royal.

Many letters are extant, written by the nuns to their friends at this trying period ; we cannot refuse ourselves the pleasure of inserting one, by way of specimen. It was from a very young nun, god-daughter to the Queen Anne, of Austria.

*Letter of the Sœur Anne Marie de St. Eustoquie
de Flescelles Brégy, to a friend of Port Royal.*

February 5, 1660.

SIR,

THE children of Babylon have cried “*Exinanite, Exinanite !*” But the foundation of God standeth sure ! and the temple of his glory, is built up by every stroke, and secured by every shock, which would destroy edifices founded only on the sand. The fashioning of the stones of that holy temple, each apart and separate, by the hands of the stranger in the gates, and far from Zion, only cemented the union, and perfected the proportions of that building, which was the joy of the whole earth, and the glory of Jerusalem. Let us trust in him, Sir, who overcame the world even in the act of being crucified and slain by the world ; let not our faith be shaken ; but let us hasten to assemble around the standard of the cross, wherever it be erected ; knowing that standard to be the banner of victory, in Him, through whom alone the christian wishes to conquer, and by which alone he is led on to certain victory.

Such are the views and sentiments of our minds, I believe I may say of our hearts. Yet I know and feel, that if the spirit be willing, the flesh is weak. I therefore beseech you, Sir, with all my heart, to pray our Lord Jesus Christ, to shelter us under the shadow of his wings, until this

iniquity be overpast. Yet, however opposite to the conceptions of sense, I repeat, ‘those are happy who suffer for the truth;’ however little unregenerate human feeling may appreciate this privilege.

We are, humanly speaking, indeed, delivered over into the hands of our enemies. We expect every moment to be imprisoned, nay, to be called to lay down our lives for the truth, without any means of rescue or escape. But what of that? In all these things, the love of Christ is able to make us more than conquerors; and to give us more than any temporal victory, by inspiring us with a full sense of the unspeakable favor it is, to be allowed to lay down the life of the body, for him who is allowed to be the way, the truth, and the life of the soul; and who first laid down his precious life for us.

Pray God for our whole community; for me especially, who am in our Lord.

Yours respectfully, in great haste,

A. M. DE ST. EUSTOQUIE DE FLESCELLES BREGY.

Two days after this cruel enterprize was accomplished, the M. Angélique wrote in the following terms to M. de Sevigné, who had embraced a penitent life for above a year, and who was connected by a close and intimate friendship with Port Royal. “At length our good Lord has seen fit to deprive us of all! Fathers, sisters, disciples, children, all are gone! Blessed be the name of

the Lord ! Grief and sorrow indeed abound, but peace and resignation to his holy will abound yet more. We are persuaded that this heavenly visitation is an effect of the great mercy of God towards us ; that it was absolutely necessary to purify our hearts, as with a refiner's fire, from its various corruptions ; and that it is especially valuable in disposing our hearts to appreciate, and to apply the favors we formerly received. Believe me, if God has greater mercies in store for us, the persecution will go yet further. Let us then humble ourselves under his fatherly chastening, with our whole heart ; and bless him for a favor so greatly valuable, though so little considered as such by the world. As for yourself, let me beseech you to spend the present eventful period in as much retirement as possible ; and as much as may be, to speak little, especially as far as relates to us. Do not enter into the relation of what is now passing, unless you are positively asked. Listen with kindness, but answer as simply, and in as few words as possible. Remember that excellent remark of M. de St. Cyran's ; that the gospel and the passion of Christ, the most important event to man, and the most bitter sufferings which can take place in human nature, are written briefly, with perfect simplicity, and without the least attempt at human eloquence. Pride, vanity, and self-love, mingle in every thing ; and since God has united us by his holy spirit of divine love, we must serve him in humility. The most valuable fruit of persecution, is a real humiliation :

and humility is best preserved in silence. Let us then keep in a state of humble silence and dependence, at the feet of our Lord : and let us seek, from his goodness and mercy, our support.”

Some of the nuns having one day asked her, “ what she thought would become of the monastery, if it was thus deprived both of its scholars and novices ?” she replied, “ My daughters, do not trouble yourselves about that ; I feel not the least anxiety as to whether your novices and your scholars will be returned ; but I do feel a deeply earnest anxiety, that the spirit of recollection, childlike simplicity, and meekness, and poverty of spirit, should be fully preserved amongst you. Whilst these subsist, give yourselves no trouble as to the rest.”

Long before the beginning of this persecution, which exiled their spiritual directors, the M. Angélique used to say to her nuns, “ Let us make good provision of the word of God, which he now so abundantly distributes to us, by the mouth of his servants. These are the years of plenty ; but the years of famine will come, when we shall be deprived of all the external assistances we now enjoy ; and we shall want all we shall have laid up in the treasury of our minds to sustain us.”

To return to our narrative. In all these conflicts of mind, although the power of faith sustained the soul of the venerable abbess, yet nature sunk exhausted beneath the overwhelming and accumulating burden. It was obvious to all, that her already shattered strength, rapidly, and daily declined.

In addition to the pressure of the heart-rending sorrows above related, she had superadded the perpetual fatigue of that multiplicity and perplexity of business, the unavoidable consequence of this time of consternation, uncertainty, and trial. Indeed she was in a state of constant exertion and harassment, both of mind and body. Sent for at all hours to the parlour, to confer on the most important concerns of business; sometimes she had to instruct friendly assistants; at others, to cope with the chicanery or the brutality of wily or unfeeling enemies. Some she saw to consult, by others she was consulted; nor did a day pass, in which they did not receive repeated messengers and letters, either of intelligence, advice, or inquiry, from Port Royal des Champs; where a precisely similar scene was transacting, to that which had taken place in the house at Paris.

Such was the difficulty of their position, and so prompt was the attention required, that it frequently happened, that as the day was spent in consultation, the night was devoted to writing the letters which were their result. Added to all this, we must mention, the additional hours of devotion set apart by the community, during this peculiar season of trial.

Under such complicated burdens, the already shattered constitution of the venerable abbess finally sunk. One day she had been engaged, beyond her usual practice, in offering up her fervent prayers for the preservation of the young

novices and scholars who had been wrested from her. Having concluded her devotion, and being completely exhausted, she was endeavoring, with some feeble remains of strength, to drag herself from the cloister to the choir, when she was overcome with the exertion, fainted, and sunk on the ground. She was carried into her chamber, and placed on the bed, from which she never rose more.

She was seized with a most dreadful oppression, accompanied by a high fever. Her sense of suffocation was so continual, as to resemble a prolonged and living death ; nor could she for a moment rest her head on the pillow, or lean back ; so that she was obliged to be supported in a sitting posture day and night. Besides which, she was at short intervals seized with such violent paroxysms, that her death was every moment expected ; so that, in the course of two months, she thrice received the last sacraments.

But though her bodily afflictions were thus grievous, they were as nothing compared to the deep sufferings of her mind. And as she slowly descended into the valley of the shadow of death, and with a footstep that never slid, passed through its fearful gulfs unhurt ; yet the adversary of the salvation of her soul was allowed to thrust sore at her, and to sift her, like wheat, to the utmost. Yet her faith was not suffered to fail. The awful sense of death seemed always present with her.

An observation frequently made by M. Arnauld, might peculiarly be applied to the M. Angélique.

He used often to say, “that the death-bed of young converts, is generally most bright ; because their newly acquired sense of the mercy of God, in some sort dazzles their eyes from steadily beholding his holiness ;” and he mostly added, “the experienced christian has too solid a view of the mercy of God in Christ, not to rejoice ; but he has too exalted views of the holiness of God, not to rejoice with trembling.”

In the beginning of her illness, the awful part of the prospect seemed chiefly present with the venerable Mère. Death was always before her. She spoke of nothing else, and thought of nothing else ; so that she might almost have said with the Apostle, “I die daily.” She was so penetrated with a sense of the infinite holiness of God, and of her own unworthiness, that she could not think without awe, of the moment when her soul should appear in his presence.

“Believe me, my dear children,” said she to her nuns, “no one knows how unspeakably awful is death ! nor can any person, yet afar off, form the least conception of what it is to stand on the brink of eternity. As for myself, I have had a serious sense of death before my eyes, from my early years, and for above the last fifty years, I may say it has continually been in my thoughts. But now that I stand at the very threshold, I find all my most serious thoughts and meditations, as less than nothing, compared with the unspeakable awfulness of the reality of what I feel it to be at this hour. The anticipation of such a change as

it now seems to me, would alone detach from every human pleasure, and make every pain sit light. As the soul stands between time and eternity, ready to ascend to God, the earth itself sinks and dwindles into a mere speck, though she can more clearly discern the path she has passed through! How is it possible for a christian, to have any other pain or pleasure, or object of occupation during all his life, than preparing himself for this awful hour." Yet, though such was her state of mind, her firm confidence in the mercies of God in Christ, supported her soul.

Her nuns sitting with her, she said to them, " We ought no more to let the world take possession of our mind during life, than at the hour of death ;" and being often in a sort of doze or lethargy for hours together, she one day said, on awaking, " I never understood so fully as I do now, one important sense of that Scripture, which says, that ' where the tree falls there it must lie.' O, my dear sisters, see the weakness, the incapacity of attention in illness ; truly, in most cases of sickness, we may say the tree is already fallen ; it is very seldom moved after."

When she was asked by the nuns, what they should pray for, as it related to her, or what they should request their sisters at Port Royal des Champs to pray for, she always made one answer, " Let them only pray God to be merciful to me, and forgive my manifold sins."

Sometimes she said, " The mercy of God ! all is included in that word mercy ! Jesus !

Jesus ! thou art my God, my strength, and my justification."

The great humility of the M. Angélique, made her even wish not to say any thing, or do any thing too remarkable, which might occasion her to be remembered with eminent honor after her death : and having been told that the M. Suireau des Anges, for whom she had a high esteem, had said many things which were remembered with edification, she answered quickly, " That dear Mère was very simple, and very humble ; but I am neither."

Having one day surprised a sister taking down on paper several of her remarks, she commanded her to burn it, saying, " It is a pity not to content ourselves with the word of eternal life itself, which contains truth, without any mixture of error ; and when I see you, my sisters, more touched and affected by words spoken by a miserable sinner like myself, than by the essential truths of which the Gospel is full, which have converted so many thousand souls to God, and on which we never can meditate enough : I consider it as a snare and temptation of the adversary of your souls."

The nuns having one day requested her to leave them her last instructions, she said, " Believe me, we have instructions enough, if we did but faithfully use them. No human power can wrest from us the treasure of true instruction, if it be truly sought for in sincerity ; for the kingdom of God is within. But curiosity it is, that makes us always hunt after what is new. St. Elizabeth

said, in her day, with fervent gratitude, ‘ Whence is it to me, that the Mother of my Lord should visit me ?’ How much more gratitude should we feel, since our Lord himself visits us ; and not only visits us once, but has promised to abide with every one of his disciples !”

On the first of June, 1661, the M. Angélique fell into a sort of agony, which made the whole community conclude, that the hour of her dissolution was at length arrived, and the last sacraments were administered. After which, her sister, the M. Agnès, entreated her to give her dying blessing to her assembled community. She could not speak, but she answered by looking down, clasping her hands, and striking her breast three times, making them understand by signs, that this it did not appertain to a sinner like herself to give.

The whole community being one day assembled round her bed, and expressing the great pain they felt on seeing her complicated sufferings, she answered, “ My dear sisters, it is all nothing in the presence of eternity at hand.”

The violence of the paroxysms, however, somewhat abated, though her weakness and sufferings were so extreme, that her life was scarcely expected from day to day. In this state, the trial which was most acutely painful, both to herself and the whole community, was the banishment of their excellent confessors and spiritual directors, M. Singlin, M. de St. Marthe, and M. de Saci.

M. Singlin had been the confessor of the M. Angélique for upwards of twenty years ; and it may be truly said, that the spiritual instructions of this eminently faithful servant of the Most High, were her first earthly consolation and dependance. It is easy then to judge how painful such a deprivation must have been, and how sensibly she must have felt both the want of his enlightened spiritual direction, and his pastoral consolation and support ; especially when that deprivation took place under circumstances of such accumulated trial, and at so solemn an hour.

Nevertheless, she supported this heavy affliction, with the same resignation and constancy, as all her other trials. “ It is the will of God,” said she, “ and that is sufficient ! I believe moreover, that M. Singlin, and all our fathers in Christ, are present with us in the spirit of christian charity, and of prayer at this moment, as fully as if I saw them here with my bodily eyes. I have always esteemed M. Singlin’s direction more than any earthly blessing, and I do so still ; but I have never put man in the place of God. He can have nothing but what he has received from God ; and God gives him nothing for us, but when, in the order of his Providence, he is appointed to be with us. Let us go straight to the fountain, which is God himself ! He never fails those who put their trust in him.”

“ My nephew,” said she, speaking of M. de Saci, who was also exiled, “ could be of no use to me, but by the permission of God ; but God, without my nephew, can be all things to me.

One day, as she was lying apparently in a doze, she heard some of the nuns, who were sitting in her chamber, whispering and bewailing their fate, at having no one to conduct them, and at being like sheep without any shepherd. “ My dear daughters,” suddenly interrupted the abbess, “ your ecclesiastics were of the saints of the earth ! let us, then, shew our sense of their value, by emulating their faith, and practising their excellent instructions, instead of unbelievably bewailing their loss. Believe me, my daughters, we stand in need of all the humiliations God sends us.” Then raising her eyes to heaven, and with a voice deeply affected, she continued, “ There was no religious house in all France, more profusely blessed than our own ! We had abundance of spiritual directors, whose piety and learning were the admiration of the land, and the good works of several distinguished characters in the world, connected with us, brought down the blessing of men upon us ; and the knowledge of truth, in clearness and in purity, shone with a brilliant light amongst us. Believe me, spiritual wealth has temptations, at least as dangerous as temporal wealth. It would have been dangerous to have remained longer in our undisturbed abundance. God has humbled us, lest we should have fallen ; and whilst men gave us credit for the knowledge of the truth, God has mercifully afforded us this means of self-examination, how far we have the love of it. Men who persecute us, know not wherefore they do these things ; but


GOD, who uses them as instruments, does for us by them that which we need. All things shall work together for good to them that love God."

Meanwhile, the bodily sufferings of the M. Angélique rapidly increased. Her legs and her whole body began to swell ; and she fell into the last stage of a confirmed and remediless dropsy. In this state her sufferings were grievous. She labored under an extreme nausea, which occasioned an absolute loathing for every description of food. Her long continued oppression, was not only very considerably increased, but she began to labor under all the tortures of soreness incident on the want of posture, and the constant pressure of one position. Whilst she was in this state, fresh measures of persecution were instituted against the house ; and an inquisitorial visit was begun by two ecclesiastics, accompanied by a numerous band of the police. One of these officers, passing through the chamber of the dying abbess, one day asked her how she felt. She tranquilly replied, " Like a person who is dying." He answered, " Do you speak of death so calmly ; does it not amaze you ?" She replied, " No ! since I only came into the world to prepare for this hour."

Not a day now passed, in which the monastery was not harassed by fresh disquietudes, or tried by afflicting intelligence. Bad news came, like Job's messengers, from every quarter ; and sorrow after sorrow followed, like successive billows, overwhelming their souls. One day the dying

abbess was told, that the officers of police were come with masons and carpenters, to wall up the doors of access to the monastery. Another time, that parties of archers were prowling about the neighbourhood, and lurking in various disguises, searching all the houses, and prying into every corner, in order to discover their confessors, and drag them to the dungeons of the Bastille. Another time, reports reached her, that all the nuns were to be immediately dispersed. But these accumulating sorrows had lost their sting, and the vanishing shadows of time and sense, could no longer disturb the deep tranquillity of approaching death.

The venerable Mère now seemed fast approaching to her last hour upon earth. She lay in a sort of doze, in which, though her outward senses and her mind seemed closed, yet her heart was still engaged with God. At this hour of extremity, the nuns were all gathered round her bed, watching the approaches of dissolution on her countenance, as she lay perfectly still, with her eyes closed and her hands clasped in prayer. They wept in silence, whilst the rattling of arms without, as the guard was changed, the vociferations of the archers, and the continual knocking and hammering of the workmen, alone interrupted this scene of death. One of the young nuns, who had been educated by the Mère, and who had the most tender attachment for her, could no longer restrain her indignation, at this last inhuman outrage. “ Surely,” exclaimed she, “ these men,



who are thus inhumanly walling up our doors, are at the same time walling up the gates of heaven against themselves.

“ My daughter, say not so,” said the abbess, unclosing her eyes, on which the shades of death seemed already gathering ; “ the ground and intention of their hearts are known to God alone, their judge and our judge ! Let us rather join in prayer to the throne of mercy, for them and for us.” The nuns, however, seeing their spiritual Mother bereft of every human aid and comfort, both temporal and spiritual, in her last moments, could not longer restrain their grief ; they burst into tears, and sobbed aloud, or wept bitterly. “ My daughters,” said the abbess, “ I never placed any man in the stead of God ! Blessed then be his goodness ; I have not now man, but God to depend upon ; his mercies never fail those who believe, and who place their reliance and trust in his name.”

Thus did the peace of God, which passes all understanding, truly keep her heart and mind, and establish it in that support and consolation, which as the world did not give, neither could it take away. She then again fell into a doze, which appeared as the prelude of death.

The nuns were every moment entering the room, with tidings of aggravated calamities and violence ; they spoke to each other in a whisper, supposing the dying abbess did not hear. She, however, suddenly said, “ My dear sisters, when I consider the dignity of such an affliction, I

tremble ! How unworthy are we of the honor of suffering for our Lord, and for his truth ! I am abased to the dust in thinking of it.”

Nevertheless, the acts of violence which were thus exercised against them, sufficiently shewed how much the mind of the King had been influenced by those who were inimical to Port Royal, or rather to the cause of scriptural and spiritual christianity ; the zealous defence of which had rendered it obnoxious.

The dying abbess determined, therefore, to address a last letter to the Queen-mother, who had a particular esteem for her brother, M. Arnauld d'Andilly ; and, with her dying hand, to make one more effort, that its last act might be not only of service to her community, but a defence to the cause of truth, in which they had suffered.

Accordingly, she dictated a long letter, which has been considered a model of piety, wisdom, and eloquence ; so that the court, on receiving it, considered it as the offspring of the united talents of Arnauld, Nicole, and Saci.

This celebrated letter was dictated at various intervals ; and almost every line was interrupted by the faintings or convulsions of its author. When finished, it was read over to the abbess, who again made some corrections, and it was then dispatched.

After which she said to the nuns around, “ Now my earthly business is done !”

From that moment, she would no longer enter into the consideration of any worldly concern, but

solely occupied her thoughts with the consideration of eternity.

During her whole illness, indeed, she was in a constant state of recollection ; her eyes were usually raised towards heaven, and she seldom spoke, unless in answer to any person, except to make short ejaculatory prayers or thanksgivings, mostly from the psalms, or other passages of holy writ.

Although some of the nuns continually sat in her room, she liked to have the curtains of her bed drawn, and to be left to solitude. Her weakness and stupor continually increased ; but when her friends opened the curtains, to see if she wanted any thing, her hands were joined in prayer, and the motion of her lips, shewed her heart to be still in communion with God.

A young nun having, unadvisedly, began to speak to her on some business, she briefly replied, “ My work is now done, it is time to sabbathize.”

As the abbess drew near her end, her assurance became more firm, and her prospects more bright and consolatory ; till at last her setting sun shone with a stedfast, glorious, and peaceful light—her fervent faith gilding, with mild beams of heavenly lustre, the darkening prospects around ; and reflecting a rich and glorious effulgence, even from the rude and shapeless skirts of those black clouds, whose huge and gathering accumulations ushered in, with solemn and yet gorgeous majesty, the benignant closing of her long, and bright, and well-spent day.

On the twenty-seventh of July, she was seized with a violent shivering fit, which lasted for two hours ; then, lifting up her eyes to heaven, and clasping her hands, she said, “ This is death ! God be praised ! God’s holy will be done ! Blessed be God, for ever and ever ! ”—which she often repeated.

From this hour to the last of her life, she spoke but little, being reduced to almost the last stage of human weakness. It was only observed that she prayed, and that continually. During the last days, she often repeated these words from Isaiah : “ Domine, miserere nostri ; te enim expectavimus : esto brachium in mane, et salus nostra in tempore tribulationis.”

The M. Angélique de St. Jean, her niece, and daughter of M. d’Andilly, said to her, “ Alas, my mother ! this time of tribulation is already come.” The abbess, turning towards her, said, “ It is good for us, my daughter.”

On the 4th of August, the same lady, hearing her pray continually, said to her, “ My dear mother, you forget us ; you pray for yourself only.” The Mère Angélique then clasped her hands, and, exerting all her remaining strength, said with an accent of the deepest emotion, “ My God, have mercy upon them all ! My God, I say upon all ! Yes, upon every one ! ” She then added, “ Particeps ego sum omnium timentium te, et custodientium mandata tua. Qui timent te, videbunt me et lætabunter, quia in verba tua supersperavi. In te, Domine, speravi, non con-

fundar in æternum.” She said this last with difficulty, and then fell into a doze, from which awaking, she said several times, “ Adieu ! adieu, my children ! I am going !”

The next day, the 5th of August, the physicians, seeing she was at the point of death, advised the last sacraments to be administered without delay ; at which proposition the abbess immediately revived, and occupied herself in repeating verses from the psalms, whilst her room was preparing. She received the viaticum with a fervor of soul, which animated her whole countenance with a beaming joy and peace, that seemed already a foretaste of heaven.

Then, seeing the community dissolving in tears, she said, “ My dear children, adieu, adieu ! Let us go to God !” She then thanked the priest who attended her ; and addressed words of exhortation and consolation to the whole company, gave her benediction to her community, and calling them one by one to her, said a few words to each.

After this, she fell into a peaceful slumber, during which her spirit departed to God, her Saviour.

The Reverend Mère, Marie Jaqueline Angélique Arnauld, died in the year 1661, on Sunday, the 6th of August ; a day on which the church, alike commemorates the resurrection and transfiguration of our Lord.

Besogne draws her character in the following terms : “ She united a profound humility to a

sublime genius. Her capacious and comprehensive understanding, and rare sagacity, superseded the necessity of cultivated talents. She combined a noble generosity and lofty magnanimity, with an astonishing simplicity, and an undeviating integrity. Endued with grandeur and strength of soul above her sex ; with an impregnable firmness, in the midst of the most pressing dangers, and the most harassing contradictions ; she was eminently gifted with a fervor of faith, worthy of the apostolic times ; with an ardent zeal for the good of her neighbour ; a parental tenderness for her nuns ; a sovereign contempt for all sublunary goods ; and a magnificent liberality towards the poor. The rich assemblage of all these virtues joined to an almost supernatural and intuitive superiority of wisdom, formed the character of this incomparable woman, and truly admirable christian heroine."

The life of the Mère Angélique is, however, perhaps her best eulogium.

The foundress of an institution, which was the light of her century and of her church, by its example ; as it still is of ours, by the luminous precepts of piety it has left behind ; the latest posterity will be under obligations to the fidelity, with which this excellent nun, when a girl of seventeen, corresponded to the light then vouchsafed her.

Those who are more intimately acquainted with the history of Port Royal, will venerate in the character of the M. Angélique, a rare union of the wisdom of the legislator, the energy and intre-

pidity of the hero, the fervor and spirituality of an evangelist, and the constancy of a martyr.

The Mère Angélique died at the age of seventy. Her corpse was exposed, according to custom, at the grate which divided the chapel from the nun's choir. The news of her death was soon spread over Paris. The common people, who revered her as a saint, filled the church, and came in crowds to look at her. For a whole day and night, two nuns were continually employed in distributing through the grate, little remembrances of her to the multitude without, who were all bathed in tears.

At the time of the M. Angélique's death, M. Singlin and M. de Saci, the directors of Port Royal, were concealed in an obscure lodging in the neighbourhood. They heard the solemn stroke of her passing bell ; they saw the crowds which thronged the convent-door, and they heard the tolling for her funeral. They guessed the occasion, but it was impossible to have any communication with the monastery. Neither could they make any inquiry, without betraying themselves, and, consequently, exposing their lives.

Before we dismiss this subject, we will add a few anecdotes of la Mère Angélique, which may be interesting, as they mark the same magnanimity of faith, though applied to trivial every day occurrences.

Whenever la Mère Angélique was so indisposed, as not to be able to attend divine service herself ; she was very exact (unless it were a case

of actual extremity,) to send all those sisters appointed to nurse her : saying, that it was a consolation, when she could not be present herself, to be able to send others in her place, to worship God in his sanctuary.

As superior of the monastery, she was very assiduous in enforcing a regular and prompt observance of every duty, especially that of attending the sick, yet she was equally careful, to unite with the strictness becoming her office, the greatest indulgence and charity, as it respected herself ; and to inculcate the same upon others. One day being very ill, and wanting some assistance, the sister who ought to have been in attendance at the infirmary, happened to be absent longer than usual ; another sister, who was also ill, observed, “ that it was very trying, that the sisters should ever leave their mother so unattended.” The Mère Angélique answered with a smile, “ Yes, my dear sister, were it a frequent habit of neglect, I ought, as superior, to remind my sisters to be in their places, at the appointed time : but, as an accidental circumstance, so far as I am concerned, I do value and think it useful, to have occasional opportunity of learning not to depend on any personal comforts. Sick persons, from their necessities, so easily and imperceptibly slide into the luxury of self-indulgence ! How many single ladies, of expectations and rank far superior to mine, are perhaps, through misfortune, at this very moment wholly destitute of any attendance ; and very many are happy and thankful,

in having one little maid to do every thing for them ; and while she was out on her business, they would be obliged to be left alone. So, my dear sister, when we want something, and that on calling nobody answers, let us just content ourselves, and think that the little maid is gone to market, and wait with patience till she returns." The sister profited so well by this advice, that she never complained afterwards, though before she was sufficiently exacting ; but when any thing was wanting, she said cheerfully, " My mother, the little maid is gone to market to day."

The Mère always thought it savored of pride, to be fond of attempting great austerities ; she often said, that christian perfection in outward conduct consists, not in extraordinary things, but in doing common things extraordinarily well.

She often said, " Neglect nothing. The most trivial action may be performed to ourselves, or performed to God. Seek after christian holiness, as a miser hunts after gold ; nothing is so small on which he does not gain some profit. Even in rising to matins, be careful to make no noise, lest you disturb invalids ; if christian charity be in your heart, your whole life may be one continual exercise of it."

" Be like David, who on every occasion, instead of coming in and going out from the suggestions of his own inclination ; always consulted God ; and said, ' Lord, shall I go there ? shall I do this ? ' "

She often said, " There is no christianity without humility. No person is truly humble, who

does not sincerely prefer the least person on earth to himself. Where there is real humility, there will be the greatest care not to incommode others. O, if we did but love others ; how easily the least thing, the shutting a door gently, the walking softly, speaking low, not making a noise, or the choice of a seat, so as to leave the most convenient to others, might become occasions of its exercise."

Many of the nuns who visited Port Royal, congratulated the sisters of that monastery on their superiors. " You (said they,) are indeed happy ; your superiors are true mothers ; ours are haughty ladies."

The Mère Angélique could not endure that sort of pride and spiritual selfishness, which leads some persons to prefer their particular house, or religious order to others. She often said, " It is quite insupportable to see religious orders biting each other, and jealous of preferences over each other, just like the most captious and punctilious men of the world. One says, our community is most ancient ; another, ours is most reformed : this urges, ours is most austere, another, ours is most liberal : this congregation says, our missions are most successful, that, ours has produced the greatest number of learned men, and our translations are unrivalled. One asserts we are most highly educated, our clergy have the most extensive and distinguished direction ; another, our usefulness is unequalled amongst the poor. For my part, (said she,) I see in scripture no such

distinctions. I am of the order of all saints, and all saints are of my order. All christians and servants of God are my fathers and mothers, and brothers, and sisters ; and I feel it a privilege and an honor, to love and serve them all, as opportunity offers."

The Mère Angélique had great confidence in God, and addressed herself to him on all occasions ; and before she consulted with any human being. Although she made use of means, and exercised discretion in ordering her affairs, that she might not tempt providence ; yet she leant alone upon the succour of God. During the raging of the civil wars, many of her community felt great fear, for which she very strongly reproved them. I well remember her language on these occasions. Amongst other things, she said to a sister who was very timorous, " Our Lord declares he will come as a thief in the night, in a day and hour when he is not expected. It does not require the assistance of an army to take away our lives. It only needs the falling of a slate, or a tile, or an infinity of other accidents, any of which can destroy us in a moment. The hour of our death and judgment is to us unknown. We must at all times regard ourselves as guilty sinners, who may at any period be summoned to appear before God And yet, my sisters, you allow yourselves to give way to vain terrors ! You deserve that God should withdraw his assistance from you ! Do you know that the Lord is on your side ? and that one may say to you, as the prophet Elisha did to his servant, that

there are more for you than there are against you? Do you not know, that all the hairs of your head are numbered? that not one can fall without his permission? that the wicked can do nothing but what he sees good? But the fact is, we do not exercise faith."


The Mère Angélique wishing to inhabit Port Royal des Champs, to assist the poor, both temporally and spiritually; some ecclesiastics wished to dissuade her; because it had long been abandoned, and because it was unhealthy; but she determined to go, saying she would never abandon her poor; and adding, "How lamentable it is, that there are so many persons, who had rather expose themselves to inconvenience than to sin. They fear to live without health, and they do not fear to live without grace. Souls which seem to belong to God, have almost all a back door, through which to escape when trials press on them."

During the civil wars of Paris, in 1652, a great multitude of artizans in the neighbouring towns and villages, were obliged to quit their employments and their commerce, on account of the misery and danger of the times; and amongst others, those who manufactured the common serge, worn by the nuns of Port Royal: so that none was to be obtained, but some pieces whose indifferent quality had been the cause of their remaining on hand from the preceding years: but which from the interruption of trade, was then offered for sale at double the price at which it was usually sold,

although the quality was very inferior. M. Guais, a pious friend of Port Royal, who often made himself useful in transacting their purchases, had been asked to endeavour to procure some serge ; but as he knew that the monastery was at that time poor, and that money would be very ill laid out in buying so bad an article, at more than double its value, he endeavored to find out some substitute ; and by accident, met with some Ras du Nord much cheaper. This is a beautiful and fine stuff, and would have worn double the time of the other. He purchased one piece, and sent it to the Mère Angélique for her approval ; not doubting but that she would be delighted at meeting with so beautiful, durable, and expensive a commodity, at a much lower price than a very inferior one. But the Mère Angélique immediately said, “ I had much rather buy the common stuffs, at double the price, than suffer these fine ones to enter the community. I consider the money I shall pay, not in the light of a dear price paid for an article of dress, but as a cheap price, to keep vanity and finery out of a religious house, which has hitherto been preserved from it. Thus it is, that religious houses fall into relaxation, by little and little. Few at once openly renounce strict and self-denying habits : but some opportunity presents itself, in which that which is a departure from religious simplicity, seems to be accompanied by a real, though accidental benefit ; and then, what was adopted under the pretext of necessity, becomes established from vanity and luxury.

Believe me, my sisters, things are not to be always estimated at the money they cost. That must ever be a dear purchase which is at the price of christian simplicity, because it is at the price of the soul. Christians must establish those regulations as to dress, furniture, &c. which they judge most suitable to those who acknowledge themselves guilty sinners, who feel they are but pilgrims here below, and who are disciples of a crucified Lord, who had not where to lay his head ; and, having established that rule, it is not one solitary instance of expediency, that should lead them to break it. Since, however, M. Guais has kindly bought us the stuff, take it ; and let it be cut up for socks and stockings, where the beauty of the stuff will do no harm, because it will not be seen."


The Mère Angélique had nothing more at heart, than to wean christians from an undue dependance and affection even on good people : and on occasion of the death of those to whom she was most attached, she often said, " Let us weep as those who have appreciated the gift God has bestowed upon us, and as those that very highly value the image of Christ in his children ; but let us not weep with that immoderate sorrow, which will cause us to add to our tears of sorrow, the bitter tears of remorse, for having mourned too humanly, as those without hope ;" to which she often added, " Yes, my sisters ; after all, we lose nothing, even in the most grievous of such trials, if we could but so persuade our-



selves. All creatures indeed die, and pass away ; but God in whom, and by whom, and to whom are all things, lives and abides, and reigns eternally !”

One day, the Mère Angélique was walking with some of the community in the wilderness ; which was a considerable space of forest land, inclosed indeed within the monastic boundary walls, but divided from the garden, by a brook about twelve feet wide ; and which was therefore at a considerable distance from the monastery itself. In the midst of this solitude they found a very little girl, of the name of Le Conte, one of their scholars, quite alone ; having, as it afterwards appeared, been left for a few moments by the nun who accompanied her, and who was just gone into the hermitage, in the forest close by, to fetch a book. Both the Mère Angélique, and the nuns were struck with the apprehension, for the risk the child seemed to have run, though the nun returned in a moment ; when the Mère Angélique said, “ My dear sisters, what apprehension do we feel at seeing this little child left alone, but for a few moments, in this wilderness ; where, after all, no very essential harm could befall her ! and how awful is it, how little we feel the danger of a soul, which is for one moment separated from God. O how infinitely more ignorant is the human soul of its true good, than this little infant is, of what belongs to its temporal safety. How little the danger of this wilderness, compared to that of the wilderness of this world, which is

not only full of thorns, and briars, and stones, but which is haunted by deadly enemies. That wilderness, where the fell serpent ever lurks in ambush to sting ; and where the roaring lion perpetually goes about, seeking whom he may devour. That indeed is a dreadful wilderness ! that danger is indeed awful ! And if we had in any degree the same perception of spiritual, that we have of temporal danger, we should see nothing so terrible as to be for one moment separated from communion with God ; wandering alone, without leaning on the arm of the Good Shepherd, who is our guide. But such is our besotted stupefaction, that we start at the least shadow of temporal danger ; and heed not, though we precipitate ourselves, by a vain self-confidence, into the irrevocable gulf of spiritual and remediless destruction !”



CHAP. VIII.


The Sœur Flavie Passart.—M. Perefixe, Archbishop of Paris ; his visit to Port Royal de Paris.—M. Angélique de St. Jean's Journal.

BUT the most painful part of the affliction of the little community of Port Royal, was yet to come. They had, like the primitive church, not only to endure fightings without, and fears within, but they likewise were in perils from false brethren. They had to endure the trial of treachery, within the little circle of their own sisters. A short sketch of the lives and of the deaths of the two nuns who were so unhappy as to betray the children of God, amongst whom their lot was cast ; and who had the signal misfortune of abusing so great a privilege, to aggravate their own condemnation, may not be uninteresting or unimproving. The circumstances in which persons are placed, vary, ad infinitum : but the lurking passions and corruptions of the human heart, and the subtle temptation by which it is led aside ; are alike in every age, and under all circumstances. The ac-

count, probably, of the fall of these two unhappy persons, may then not be without its use, to those whose position may be widely different.

Amongst the hundred choir nuns, who at this period inhabited Port Royal ; were two, who were more especially indebted to the charity and bountiful generosity of the M. Angélique. These were the Sœur Flavie Passart, and the Sœur Dorothee Perdreau.

The former was the daughter of a tanner of La Ferté Milon. Her mother was a respectable woman, who being left without support, at the death of her husband, quitted her native village ; and was kindly received, from charitable motives, by the nuns of Port Royal des Champs. She was appointed *tourrière* ; and, in that capacity, had apartments in the exterior part of the monastery ; to which the generous nuns added a pleasant garden. She was also kindly allowed to bring her little daughter with her ; then a little sprightly child ; and afterwards the sister Flavie ; so celebrated for her talents, her treachery, and her unhappy end. The young Flavie remained with her mother for some years, during which she was remarkable for great activity, vivacity, and intelligence. At the age of fourteen, having expressed a fervent desire to become a nun, she prevailed on the M. Angélique, to admit her on trial, as a postulant, into the monastic inclosure. But after a short time, her exuberant imagination, self-will, and levity, were found to assimilate very little with the habits of her sober




mind and religious companions ; so that notwithstanding repeated admonitions, and the long forbearance, which the charity of the M. Angélique, was anxious to extend to this friendless girl as far as possible, without compromising the discipline of the house ; her haughty and unsubdued character, and open contempt of her superiors, and of the regulations of the house, obliged them to dismiss her at the end of four months ; though not before her ambitious and intriguing spirit, and her consummate artifice, had occasioned much inconvenience, and sowed the seeds of discords, which it was not easy to eradicate.

Her wish of embracing a monastic life still continuing ; she, at the age of nineteen, applied for admission at the monastery of Gif ; a pious, but unenlightened community. Her apparent zeal, and talent for speaking on spiritual subjects, soon deluded them into an exalted idea of her sanctity ; and without more delay than was indispensable, they admitted her to profession.

No sooner had the Sœur Flavie taken the monastic vow, than she exhibited passionate signs of the most fervent and vehement, not to say enthusiastic religious feeling. For we must term enthusiasm, that which being fervent in degree, is yet unsubstantial in foundation. Her whole conduct suddenly seemed to mark the most extraordinary sanctity, at least to those who measured internal sanctity, by demonstrative profession. At chapel, at prayer, at fastings, at watchings, the Sœur Flavie could never be satisfied, with

doing only what others did. She was the first to appear, the last to remain on her knees ; on abstinence days she fasted, on fasts she prolonged the time ; and even when her face was veiled, she was always to be distinguished by the number of relics, and pictures of devotion, and good books, with which she was literally laden. Nor were the good but unsuspicious nuns of Gif, less deceived by the multitude of miraculous interpositions, and divine communications with which she professed to be favored. Few weeks were suffered to elapse, without some malady of the sister Flavie ; which was always regularly terminated by a miraculous cure : and that generally took place on some day, when distinguished visitors were expected to attend service at the monastery : in the choral part of which, her fine voice was the chief ornament. The good nuns of Gif, had not the matured wisdom and experience of those at Port Royal : and the sister Flavie was herself a very young person, and a novice. The heart is deceitful above all things, who can know it ; probably she herself, as well as the nuns amongst whom she resided, were alike deceived ; mistaking youthful zeal, and the workings of a luxuriant imagination, and fervent temperament, for the established deep conviction, and unwearied love of genuine piety. They, as well as their novice, fell into the common error of estimating piety, by that fervor in conversation, which is frequently the fruit of a glowing imagination only ; and by her eagerness to adopt extraordinary penance, so



natural to the love of distinction of the natural heart ; and by her constant relations of miraculous interpositions, visions, &c. &c. so often the unsuspected refuge of spiritual self-love. Well had it been, had they judged her piety, by the surer test of an humble, retired, and recollected spirit ; strict fidelity in the discharge of little, and unobserved, and unshewy duties ; an humble charitable walk ; a heart too singly walking with God to allow of an imagination easily set afloat ; a great care of scandalizing others, and an aptitude and willingness to bow under contradiction to self-will ; and to be grateful and humble under reproof. The nuns of Gif, and the Sœur Flavie herself probably, forgot that the same self-love which in the world inspires a desire to excel in worldly accomplishments ; in an unenlightened religious community, leads to seek spiritual distinction, by relations of those miracles or visions, which in that community are esteemed peculiar marks of divine favor ; and above all the Sœur Flavie disliked being undistinguished. So far did she carry this taste for miracles, that it would be almost impossible to enumerate all those of which she professed herself to be the favored subject. She seldom spoke of Christ, nor did she manifest any signs of building her hopes on his atonement, or of finding her peace in communion with him ; or of her chief desire being after conformity to him. But her favorite conversation, was a gratuitous supposition of her especial favor in the divine sight ; manifested by her having

been, from infancy, the subject of miraculous cures. Having remained some time at the monastery of Gif; where her reputation for seraphic piety daily increased; she, through the injudicious zeal of the abbess, who thought she could never sufficiently do her honor, was introduced to the correspondence of some ecclesiastics of distinguished piety. Soon after, the Sœur Flavie thought, or imagined she thought, the rule of that convent too little strict, and their piety not sufficiently austere; and, with the permission of her too partial superior, resolved to make another attempt to enter Port Royal des Champs, in order to embrace the strictest observances of the austere rule of St. Bennet. To her undiscerning superior at Gif, and even to the scrutinizing eye, but generous heart of the M. Angélique; there appeared in the first view, somewhat noble in the desire of the Sœur Flavie to leave Gif, where she was so extraordinarily esteemed, and where the rule was easy; to solicit admission at Port Royal, the most strict monastery of the order, and one from which she had already received a repulse; and that at a time, when that monastery was entering the thick cloud of a severe persecution, If not only the nuns at Gif, but the clear sighted M. Angélique, were deceived, is it wonderful that the Sœur Flavie, should herself have been the dupe of the intricacies of her own deceitful heart?

The sequel of her history alone, awakened in the minds of others the suspicion, that her ruling motive might be widely different: and suggested the recol-

lection, that the Sœur Flavie, so admired at the small and undistinguished monastery of Gif, might begin to feel the want of a wider theatre. That Port Royal was in the height of its celebrity, and that its very persecutions, were the means of holding it up as a beacon of light to admiring Europe. That half the christian church revered Port Royal as a school of prophets, and a land of saints ; and that its very persecutors, were dazzled by the brilliance of its talents ; and the papal throne itself trembled at its success. It was not, however, until many years afterwards, that such suspicions were adverted to. And whether it were really from the inconsistency and love of novelty, which are the necessary fuel to a lively imagination ; or whether because the talents of Port Royal, promised her a wider sphere of exercise to her boundless activity and intriguing spirit, must ever remain unknown. She however only remained six years at Gif ; and determining, if it were by any means possible, to find entrance at Port Royal ; she began a correspondence, on a pretence of conscience with M. le Maitre, then a recluse there, and nephew to the M. Angélique. She wrote well, her style was polished and elegant. Her temperament fervent, her mind luxuriant, glowing, and imaginative. M. le Maitre, in the deep impression of his own conversion, was peculiarly open to trust the religious professions of others. His charity and zeal for souls, were unbounded ; and especially for those characterized by the fervor, eloquence, and talent, by which he was himself so

especially distinguished. He only saw the Sœur Flavie's letters, and as he had no opportunity of knowing her, his imagination and benevolence soon filled up the picture. The nuns of Gif, from whom he could alone enquire, were too undiscerning to perceive the delicate lineaments of those passions, which afterwards shot forth such deep and baleful roots ; and which afterwards overshadowed Port Royal, like the deadly upas tree, spreading death and desolation, as far as the shadow of its fatal branches extend. Nay, such are the tortuous sinuosities of human intention, and so often does the ruling passion elude the vigilant scrutiny even of the sincere disciple ; that we may fully not only hope, but believe, that the Sœur Flavie was herself deceived, whilst she, with reiterated importunity, urged with so much apparent fervor and humility, her wish to be but received at Port Royal, even in the meanest capacity ; that she might be numbered amongst the excellent of the earth, that she might sit at the feet of the saints and prophets, and spill her unworthy blood with that of the martyrs of that persecuted house ; and share persecution, and death if needful, with the persecuted children of God.

She was herself probably not aware, of the secret vanity, love of distinction, desire of a wider field of action and display, which subsequent events gave reason to think lurked beneath. M. le Maitre soon conceived a high esteem for her ; and his representations, were the means of

procuring her an entrance into Port Royal. Perhaps the permission was granted the more easily, because of the high eulogiums of the nuns of Gif ; which inspired the Port Royal nuns with a fear lest they had acted too harshly, in having before dismissed her ; and even the M. Angélique herself, seemed as though her usual penetration was lulled to sleep by a conscientious fear, lest she had been betrayed into too much severity towards childish errors ; and lest she should unhappily have thwarted a real religious vocation, in a sincere, though very imperfect child of God. At Port Royal then accordingly, the Sœur Flavie, in an evil hour arrived.

Here she was received gratuitously, and not only so, but the M. Angélique, knowing all her family to be in the depths of poverty, on the day of her pronouncing the vows, generously provided for every one of her brothers and sisters, to each of the latter of whom she presented a sum of money, sufficient for their honorable support ; and each of the former, she placed in some respectable avocation.

The Sœur Flavie passed through the whole of her noviciate, with almost unexampled fervor. She possessed sufficient tact, not to begin by bringing forward any of her favorite legends. Or perhaps, she was really overawed, by the genuine, the solid, and well grounded piety and religious instruction of that house. She contented herself then in the outset, with being foremost in every practice of devotion ; and exceeded in rigor in

every penance and practice of austerity. Some faults indeed she had ; and great as was the charity of Port Royal, they were of a nature not to pass wholly unobserved. That she was more distinguished for zeal than for humility, meekness, patience, or forbearance, was indeed evident ; and whilst her imaginative eloquence in religious discourse was brilliant, the simplicity of christianity was seldom adverted to. Her activity too, and her numerous penances were often admired ; her spirit of recollection was not observed ; but then the kind, though judicious nuns of Port Royal, knew that perfection is not to be expected from any one ; still less did they expect much spiritual consistency, in one so young, and who had, unfortunately, been placed for six years in a community, who, though simple hearted, were wholly unenlightened ; and who rather looked up to her with admiration, and sought rather to obtain, than to give directions. Then her leaving the prosperous monastery at Gif, to take a zealous share in the fortunes of a persecuted establishment, seemed a pledge of her sincerity : so at least thought, for a season, the nuns of Port Royal. Nay, even the M. Angélique was for a while, like the rest, deceived. Perhaps even the Sœur Flavie herself, did not know the depths of subtlety of the human heart ; and how willing ambition is to act the part of conscience, in suffering, acting, or abiding any difficulties, if it can but feed its insatiable thirst for distinction, exhibition, and applause. So completely deceived

were the nuns, that after a time, she was appointed sub-mistress of the novices, under the venerable M. Suireau des Anges ; a lady who was distinguished by her own exalted piety, yet more than by her close relationship to the celebrated Nicole. And such was the talent and fervor displayed, that it was expected by some, that she might in time be placed in the highest posts in that house. The Sœur Flavie had always been distinguished for superior talent and ingenuity ; and all its resources were now directed to the secret object of her ambition, that of obtaining distinction in the convent. These views induced her, still to maintain the highest appearance of sanctity ; and her deep hypocrisy, or self-delusion, joined to a terrible judgment of God, were the cause that her apparent piety gained her the greatest reputation and good opinion of those who then governed Port Royal. She took every means to deceive, and spared no pains to ingratiate herself, with the most unwearied assiduity, into the good opinion of the religious and wise, but wholly unsuspecting nuns ; and for her own irreparable calamity, she was but too successful. They had loaded both herself and her family with bounty, even from childhood ; and it little occurred to their generous minds, to suspect hypocrisy in the poor friendless orphan their bounty had rescued from destruction. They reaped the transient temporal evil, from their erroneous judgment ; the unhappy Sœur Flavie, incurred the awful and enduring misfortune of her spiritual hypocrisy and deep

ingratitude. She was believed to possess a peculiar talent for the government and education of children. She had excelled in that department at Gif; and she was, before long, promoted to the superintendence of the girl's school, in the monastery of Port Royal. This promotion it is to be feared, became the immediate occasion of her fall; by opening the first door to the ambitious career her fervent imagination soon pictured beyond it. The celebrated and extensive school establishments at Port Royal, were constructed on a very distinct foundation, and occupied a very different scale, from the inconsiderable and obscure seminaries at Gif. The reputation of the latter, had probably never pierced beyond the obscurity of their own village; whilst the fame of the Port Royal schools, the seminary of the chief rank, talent, and piety, of catholic christendom, was in the mouth of all Europe. This celebrity, probably, added fresh fuel to the smothered spark of ambition, which lurked in the heart of the Sœur Flavie. O how well would it be, if disciples in receiving the first marks of distinction, truly examined before God, whether they were given in mercy, or as an awful judgment; as a superadded means of usefulness, or as a trial and temptation, needing a double portion of grace and humility. This consideration did not, however, occur to the Sœur Flavie. She believed herself a person of far superior capacity and qualifications, to the venerable M. des Anges, who was at the head of the school department;

and instead, therefore, of assisting her as sub-mistress, she soon began to domineer over the children with a high hand, and to treat her superior with marked want of consideration. It was, after a short time, visible to those occupied in the same obedience, that she resented any direction, and behaved with great impatience, when the least fault was hinted at, or the least improvement suggested, in her conduct respecting the children ; so much so, that whenever she received any reproof, she yielded to a sullenness and gloom, which sometimes lasted whole weeks, weeping incessantly, and refusing to eat, till praise for some other thing restored her spirits. After a time, she began the same course she had pursued at Gif. Whenever her conduct was impugned, she professed to be taken violently ill. Under this pretext, her duties were abandoned. She took to her bed, and left the school to proceed as it could ; but no sooner had she put the whole house to the inconvenience of assembling the community, to deliberate who should replace her, than some sudden miracle never failed to restore her, and to enable her to enter triumphantly the very chapter assembled, who had now only to listen to her account, by the relics of what saint she had been thus opportunely restored ; thus tacitly throwing the whole blame of her alleged illness on the superior, by whose reproof it was, as she said, occasioned. The attachment she professed for her spiritual directors was unbounded, so long as it lasted, and was carried to the most exaggerated

and fanatical excess. Such, likewise, was her professed veneration for holy persons and relics. Thus, neglecting faith in Christ, and obedience to his spirit, did she vainly seek a reputation for sanctity ; but no sooner did her directors suggest an improvement, or hint a reproof, than her good opinion vanished ; and was changed into as violent an antipathy and lasting enmity. At her first entrance at Port Royal, her favorite saint was of course Jansenius. He was honored in the house she had just entered ; and her esteem of him would, she was in hopes, prove a means of procuring esteem for herself. She placed his picture in her cell, with that of M. de St. Cyran. By degrees, she felt her way, to know how far she might build on the credulity of those about her ; and she gradually returned to the same practices, which had so well succeeded at Gif. On a christmas day, when the ground was covered with snow, she entered the school room, with the branch of a rose tree in her hand, on which was growing a full blown rose. She exhibited it to the children under her care, assuring them this branch was perfectly leafless, like other wintry branches, only a few days since ; but that it had budded and blown on being suspended in her cell, before the picture of M. de St. Cyran. The M. Angélique gravely reproved her falsehood, and never fully trusted her more ; but from that time kept a watchful eye over her, to distinguish whether she acted from the folly of disordered and imaginative fanaticism, or from the deep design of an

ambitious hypocrite. The Sœur Flavie had experienced the unbounded generosity of the Mères of Port Royal ; and, because she felt the warmth of their charity, she forgot the superior light of their intelligence. She counted on the folly and credulity of those about her ; but her calculation at Port Royal was mistaken. Intent, however, on her own plans, she did not pause to observe the effect her conduct produced, on the charitable, but sagacious and observant eyes of the abbesses of Port Royal. She gradually slid into the same conduct she had pursued at Gif. She began indeed cautiously, and with the children only. Unable to detect the truth or fallacy of her relations, they eagerly listened to her tales of miraculous vision and apparitions, so confidently communicated ; and they began to entertain the highest opinion of one, favored so much by heaven. If her tales were credited, it would appear that few holy persons departed this life, without favoring her, after death, with two or three visits ; nor were there any saints of any note in the calendar, who had not repeatedly used their intercession, in obtaining her miraculous recovery from some dangerous illness. One circumstance indeed, attending her indispositions, was peculiarly remarkable : they always infallibly came on, whenever it became her duty to do any servile office, and they as certainly miraculously disappeared, on the application of relics, if she were called to any post of honor. She was never satiated with amassing relics of M. de St. Cyran,

M. Bagnols, the M. des Anges, and in general all the distinguished saints of Port Royal After a time, she astonished the children by professing to divine their secret thoughts ; and any little circumstances which had occurred in their infancy, or little plans they had proposed. These discoveries, filled the simple hearted children with the utmost surprise ; and, at length, they related it with great astonishment to the M. Angélique. But the abbess was not to be so duped. She instantly recollected, that the Sœur Flavie was the person who kept the keys of the children's writing desks, in which were contained their private letters, journals, &c. The M. Angélique was silent ; but immediately dismissed her from this office. In the mean time, however, her success, and her apparent piety, had proved the means of her promotion, till having rapidly ascended the earliest rungs of the ladder, she began secretly to aspire towards the summit. “ Lay hands suddenly on no man,” is the experienced advice of the inspired apostle ; and happy had it been both for the nuns of Port Royal, and for the Sœur Flavie herself, had they duly weighed the injunction. Meanwhile the Sœur Flavie, emboldened by success, still pursued the course she had adopted at Gif. But her professions of divine communications, supernatural appearances, and miraculous cures, as they occurred more frequently, became more and more coolly received. Her new companions began to observe, that whilst laying claim to so much that was extraordinary, she frequently

and increasingly failed, in her ordinary but un-conspicuous daily duties. It was remarkable, that a person should be so favored of God, who manifestly attached herself so exclusively, to that which was splendid in the eyes of men ; and it was singular, that one professing a state of much angelic rapture, should be so little careful in maintaining ordinary christian tempers. Hence the very means to which the Sœur Flavie resorted, to establish her reputation for extraordinary sanctity, became the occasion of infusing the first doubts of her sincerity ; and inducing some of the more experienced nuns wholly to question her religious profession : and when the M. Agnès and the M. Angélique stood in doubt of her, and gradually paused in the career of advancement they had incautiously allowed her to enter, though they still retained their wonted kindness, she felt that their eyes were partially opened, and that it was only by an apparent change of character, she could obtain their esteem ; which esteem she ardently wished, as the only road then apparently open, to that advancement which was her true object. Zeal in favor of Jansenism would effect this. She did not know the spirit of true disciples of Christ ; and she did know, that with false professors alone, the union of opinion which forms a party, stands in place of that union of principle, which alone cements the living stones together, upon Christ, the rock and only true foundation. She imagined that by espousing a party, she should gain the good opinion of Port Royal. Accordingly, from


that time, she did not so much stand firm under their persecutions, as combat violently ; always proposing the most extreme and unconciliatory measures of resistance, instead of opposing to the wrath of man, only meekness, patience, and spiritual wisdom ; and, in speaking of them, manifesting a party spirit against their persecutors. This by no means succeeded in raising her in the esteem of the truly excellent abbess. Her violence in their cause was not the sobriety of the conviction of truth : still less was it truth working by love. Thus the very means by which she hoped to win the favor of the abbess, proved the cause of deepening their distrust ; and of their avoiding, more and more, to take her into their counsels. As the eyes of the superiors of Port Royal became more fully opened, they began gradually but progressively to separate her, more and more, from their confidence and their deliberations. It was obvious that such violence and enmity could not be the genuine work of the Spirit of God ; and that the more holy the cause, the more was it desecrated, by enlisting in its service such unsanctified passions. And the wise and pious abbess, feeling that the Sœur Flavie was acting in her own spirit, instead of in that of Christ, though little suspecting her hidden springs of action, gradually found it advisable to remove her from places, where she was entrusted with any spiritual care of others. She was removed from the care of the children, and established Procuratrix of the house. The Sœur Flavie,

finding her schemes did not succeed, and all her hopes of advancement at Port Royal were over, and that instead of aspiring to any of the highest offices in the house, she must now content herself with one, which, though temporally high, did not conduct to the abbess's throne, became wholly changed. From that moment she conceived the most deadly enmity to Port Royal, and the most rancorous animosity against her former benefactresses ; and she resolved to leave nothing untried to overthrow the monastery ; or at least to induce the church and the court to proceed to extremities against those who conducted it.

Such was the Sœur Catherine de St. Flavie Passart, so famous for her treachery, her detractions, and her intrigues ; and such were the feelings by which she was actuated towards those, who had received her a poor friendless girl, and who had provided for her whole family.

She resolved then to compass, if possible, the ruin of those to whom she was indebted for all the comforts she possessed. This, however, she could not accomplish overtly ; not only could she attain her end more surely, and with less inconvenience to herself, by becoming a secret traitor than an open enemy ; but likewise, having professed to outvie every person in the house, in zeal for Jansenism, she could scarcely unblushingly turn about, and immediately espouse openly the precisely opposite side. It might, indeed, have seemed a sufficiently difficult task, to accomplish persuading the archbishop of Paris and the Jesuit


party, whom she had so violently opposed, of her sincerity. Had they been good men, they would doubtless have felt little inclined to trust one, who began by undertaking the part of a spy, to betray those among whom she professed to live as a sister. But how easily do persons delude themselves, when governed by worldly interests. The court was adverse to Port Royal : and the archbishop was the creature of the court. It became then necessary to him to find a tool by any means. Hence he easily received the secret recantation of the Sœur Flavie, who professed that she clearly saw the error of her ways, and should never have embraced the errors of Jansenism, but from having been misled by the subtlety and dangerous finesses of the nuns of Port Royal ; and that she had been overborne by the commanding talents of the M. Angélique, and the M. Agnès ; and the literary acuteness of their niece the M. Angélique de St. Jean, and entangled in the wiles of sophistry, by the two ingenious young nuns, the Sœurs Christine Briquet, and Eustoquie de St. Brégy Flescelles. She had indeed, she confessed, for a time fallen ; but God, in distinguishing mercy, had vouchsafed by an especial revelation, not only to unmask all their plots, and to shew her that she was to obey her superiors in all things ; but, as a still more signal favor, he had appointed and selected her to atone for her past transgressions, by more effectually devoting herself to the service of the hierarchy, by narrowly observing the nuns of Port Royal, and secretly bringing the arch-



bishop and his myrmidons, a report of their proceedings. The archbishop's anxiety to obtain a tool, by whose instrumentality he might please the court, induced him to an easy credence ; or at least, to an easy profession of credence in this tale. The Sœur Flavie was secretly restored to favor ; and from thence forward, devoted herself to become a spy over her sisters, and a traitress to her benefactresses.

Thus was it, that the Sœur Flavie, finding her schemes of aggrandizement in the convent defeated, suddenly changed her mode of proceeding, and true only to her ambitious spirit, resolved to ingratiate herself with the enemies of Port Royal ; and especially with the Archbishop of Paris, who was at their head. How little do we at the moment of departure from God, and of yielding to evil passions, perceive the termination of the course ; and how continually the evil, first allowed in the will, betrays us to that tempter, who beguiles on from precipice to precipice, from fall to fall, till his unwary dupes find themselves engulfed in eternal and inextricable ruin. At the period of which we speak, the Sœur Flavie Passart only probably felt nettled, at being no longer solicited to fill offices, of which she imagined her talents rendered her capable ; and when giving way to her resentment, she revenged herself, by fomenting the dissensions between Port Royal and its ecclesiastical superiors ; she probably only at that time intended, to compel the M. Angélique and Agnès to place her in the

offices she coveted, and to oblige them to yield her some post of honor, through the authority of the Archbishop. Had any one then told her, that she would cause the imprisonment of her benefactresses, and the adoption of measures, by which the lives of many of her sisters would be miserably sacrificed, she would have probably thought it impossible ; and replied with Hazael, “ Is thy servant a dog, that he should do these things ? ” O, how awful a thing is it to depart from the living God, and to hearken to the voice of a stranger ! One evil yielded to, opens the source of others : and how often, as the awful punishment and judgment for wilful departure, does God permit stronger temptations to urge, and the besetting sin to find its full scope, and thus to draw down its full retribution. The Sœur Flavie Passart from that hour, became devoted to the Jesuit party. Her great zeal for Jansenism caused her to be unsuspected by the nuns. It now apparently greatly increased ; thus enabling her effectually to act the double part, of fomenting all the scruples of the nuns against signature ; pointing out every passage of scripture against denying Christ, and urging them to the most decided opposition ; and then betraying to the Archbishop, the scruples she had herself excited, and the counsels she had sometimes alone supported, or even suggested. By these means, she vaguely hoped, and not without reason, that the Archbishop might be induced to depose all the officers, and possibly some of the superior nuns ;



after which a re-election must take place, in which she herself could not fail to come in for some considerable office, both from the interest of the archbishop, and as the just reward of her subserviency ; and on the part both of the nuns and the archbishop, as the just meed of her distinguished talents. With this view, she outwardly professed renewed zeal for the cause of the unsuspecting nuns ; whom she in vain sought by every means in her power, to stir up to such violent and improper measures, that they might irritate the archbishop to dismiss them : but this scheme having failed, she secretly exercised her talents for invention ; not only by betraying the counsels they really held, but by wholly misrepresenting their conduct and words. Her treasons began in the year 1661, almost immediately after the M. Angélique's death : it seems singular that this very Sœur Flavie Passart, was mistress of the children, at the time of the occurrence of the remarkable cure of Mlle. Perrier ; and that she was the very person, who bade her pray to Christ, as she applied the sacred thorn. She also was the first person who declared its miraculous effect. Hence she was doubly guilty, in thus acting counter to what (whether the fact were true or false) she had herself, not many months before, declared to be supported by a notable miracle.

The Sœur Flavie, at first, confined her ambition to that of deposing the present officers ; but M. Péréfixe, the archbishop, having one day hinted, that they might be imprisoned for a season, and

dispersed in other convents, till the monastery was reduced to obedience, she at once beheld the door open to that career of ambition, she had imagined for ever closed against her. She doubted not, that if she could but obtain the exile for life of her benefactress, that her abilities and services, would be of the greatest use to the archbishop, in influencing the community, and that he would therefore, if she could only effect their expulsion, without question install her into the abbacy itself. She therefore used redoubled diligence, in endeavoring to insinuate herself into all their counsels ; both to exasperate the nuns against their ecclesiastical superiors, and to envenom the mind of the court party against them. Although the nuns had not the slightest suspicion of her treachery ; yet the violent measures she counselled, made them not anxious for her presence. They were, however, not long in discovering they were betrayed ; and that their most secret counsels, and the part taken by each, were immediately made known to their enemies ; though they could not imagine who was the traitor. The Sœur Flavie, who only wished herself to be abbess, persuaded the archbishop, that if twenty-six of the principal nuns were imprisoned in various monasteries, the rest might be reduced to obedience, by a person of talent, and devoted to the church. Which expression she thought could only point out herself. Accordingly, one morning the archbishop came, attended by a long train of civil authorities to Port Royal de Paris,

and arrested sixteen of the principal nuns, amongst whom was the aged M. Agnès, and imprisoned them in various convents, under lock and key ; a short time after which, he paid a similar visit to Port Royal des Champs, imprisoning ten nuns. The spirit of Port Royal, will perhaps be best exhibited in their own relation, of this afflicting event. The following are extracts from one of the nun's relation of M. Péréfixe's visit to their monastery at Paris.

“ On Thursday, 21st of August, his Grace the Archbishop arrived at half-past twelve ; having first entered the church, he commanded the attendance of the whole community, to which he made a long discourse, the object of which was, to declare that since they had refused to subscribe the formulary condemning Jansenius, he was resolved to exercise his authority, in compelling their obedience. He then required a list of all the sisters of Port Royal, arranged in the order of succession in which they had entered the house, with the family name, and name of religion of every nun respectively affixed. He then commanded them, in a voice of thunder, to choose between obedience and liberty ; or disobedience and exile, excommunication and imprisonment. After that, he ordered the community to retire into the room of the M. Agnès, which was close by ; and that each nun should appear separately before him, according to the order of priority, and one by one severally accede to the signature, or submit to the sentence. Our little company full of consternation

and fear, lest either themselves or any in their community might fall ; thus having to encounter singly the authority of the archbishop and his clergy, felt as the disciples did ; when each enquired, “ Is it I ? ” In this state of awful suspense and distrust, they pressed round the M. Agnès, then in her seventy-first year ; the only surviving foundress of their reform. She took the testament, and at the place in which she opened, found the text, “ *Hæc est hora vestra, et potestas tenebrarum.* ” “ Yes,” said the venerable Mère Agnès, “ this is indeed the hour of the power of darkness ; ” but the same God has also declared, ‘ as thy day so shall thy strength be ; ’ and has commanded, that ‘ he who walks in darkness, and has no light ; should stay himself in peace, upon the name of the Lord.’

“ We all then thought not only, that the hour of suffering was come ; and that Satan was about to sift us like wheat ; but that our Lord prays for his church, as he did for that apostle on whom it was founded, that their faith should not fail. We then read together our Saviour’s prayer in the garden of Gethsemane, before his passion ; and there sat together at his feet in silent supplication. First one, and then another, going out as the one preceding returned and silently took her place ; all remaining in the most painful suspense, and none knowing who had proved faithful.

“ In this state things remained, during four hours ; which M. Péréfixe employed, in endeavouring to shake the constancy of our little group ;



after which he ordered the whole community to assemble in the Chapter house, which was accordingly done. The pause between our assembly, and his entrance, was a most anxious one. None knowing what part the others had taken ; but from the opinion they might have formed of their fidelity. The archbishop soon entered in full pontificals. His countenance was terrible. He seated himself in his chair of state. He then rose in the midst, and said, that seeing their disobedience, obstinacy, and rebellion, in preferring through pride, what they termed ‘conscience,’ to the judgment of their superiors ; and not having yielded to their remonstrances ; he now, this day, declared them rebellious, disobedient to the church, and incapable of participation in the sacraments, or any other holy thing. He therefore forbade their approaching the altar as wholly unworthy, contumacious, and mutinous ; and moreover, he warned them to prepare for his return at the earliest day, to denounce a signal punishment which should make them tremble. He then turned his back upon us, and prepared to go. Our whole assembly wept in silence, and in excess of grief. The archbishop, just as he was going out, perceiving through the windows several carriages of visitors, just arrived, and amongst others, that of the Princess of Guimenée, who was a particular friend to the house ; turned back a few steps, and addressing himself to the sisters, who were not yet dispersed, exclaimed with a warmth and terrible emotion : “ I expressly forbid

you all, and every one, under pain of rebellion and disobedience, to have any communication whatever, with any one individual out of this monastery ; and if you have the hardihood to contravene this order, in any degree, you shall see the consequence ; aye, and bitterly repent too, disobeying your archbishop.” The Sœur Angélique de St. Jean, answered, “ All punishments my lord, must be light after deprivation of the sacraments.” Our excellent abbess, Madame de Ligny, niece to the Chancellor Seguier, being about to speak, he stopped her before she had uttered a sentence, by saying, in a fit of exasperation amounting to fury, “ Hold your tongue, hold your tongue ! you are a little, proud, impertinent, self-conceited fool ! wholly destitute of common sense ; talking of what you know nothing ; in short a pert, insolent, ignorant fool ! you know not what you mean, and one need only to look in your face to see it.” So low could the burthen of supporting a bad cause, sink the dignity of the Archbishop of Paris ! perplexing him, and making him equally forget that he was by profession a christian, by birth a gentleman and a noble, and by God’s providence an ecclesiastic of the first rank, in that kingdom which professes to hold the first place in Christendom. Whilst speaking in this strange manner, his footmen and pages were assisting him to put on his cloak. Some sisters having besought him in vain to restore them to the participation of the sacrament, on his refusal, added, “ Well, my lord, there is in heaven a

Judge, who reads the intentions of the heart ; and who knows that a conscientious scruple, alone prevents our immediate compliance with your wishes ; and to him we commend our cause.” To which he answered, “ Aye, aye, when we get to heaven it will be time enough to consider that, and see how things go.”

The abbess having said, “ My Lord Archbishop, it is not many weeks ago, since your grace made a formal official visit of our house, and drew up a document of attestation to the piety and good order, you were pleased to say prevailed there ?” To which he impatiently answered, “ What is all that to the purpose ? what signifies it that you are holy, virtuous, religious, and pious ? I tell you, though pure as angels, you are proud as Lucifer, if you refuse to yield your conscience to your superiors.” Our sisters, in the agony of being refused the sacraments, fell at his feet and said, “ O my Lord, this is the bitterness of death ;” to which he replied, going away, “ Go, go, comfort yourselves, you shall not die without having the pleasure of seeing me again ; and that right speedily too !” So saying, he entered his carriage, and departed. We went to church to say the Miserere, which we did, prostrate, and with so many tears and sighs, that our words were scarcely intelligible, but to God who reads the heart.

“ A few days after this episcopal visit, a lady informed us it was currently reported in Paris, that the principal officers and nuns of the monastery, were to be imprisoned. Various reports

reached us from day to day. All agreed that the most violent measures would be resorted to ; and the archbishop was reported to have reiterated at a public council, several times : “ These nuns will not sign, because they make it a point of conscience not to do it ; but I make it a point of honor, that they absolutely shall sign.” On the 25th of August, the archbishop went abroad early in the morning, and his carriage, as well as those of his emissaries, was seen hastily going from convent to convent, which left little doubt, but he was securing cells for the imprisonment of those nuns he meant to remove ; and that he would most probably, next day, put his plan in execution.

“ The news of these measures, together with all the reports that reached our ears, sufficiently convinced us that our hour was come ; and that we were on the eve of the separation so long threatened ; which we had feared above all things, and which was equally terrible to us, both in a spiritual and in a temporal point of view. In the first, dreading lest the horrors of a long and rigorous solitary confinement, should cause us to fail ; on the other, shrinking from a separation from persons so dear to us, and whose counsel had been our greatest earthly means of support and consolation. In this terrible trial most of us passed the night of Monday in the choir, in prayers and tears, before the holy sacrament. It was from the very ground of our heart, that we implored the divine mercy and support. We did

indeed feel of a truth, that without him we could do nothing ; and we besought him, if possible, to avert from us a tempest, which humanly speaking, seemed so disproportioned to our great weakness. Or, that if it were his will that we should drink of this cup, that he would enable us to take it even to the dregs, without dishonoring his most holy cause, or flinching from declaring his truth. We earnestly prayed for the spirit of the apostles, who rejoiced they were counted worthy to suffer these things for his name's sake.

The night being thus passed, next morning the bell rung for assembling at the usual hour. As we convened, we looked upon each other's faces, as those who might, perhaps, see each other in the flesh no more ; and at that hour, how little did differences of taste or disposition between some of us appear. We only felt and viewed each other, as those who were united by the strong bond of all being ready to suffer for our common Lord. The M. Abbess being obliged at this trying moment to be absent on business, the M. Prioress held the assembly. She began by stating, that this would probably be the day of our dispersion. She then spoke of the strong bond of union in the truth ; a union which no change of time or place can sever. She then most humbly asked pardon of the community, for any faults she might have committed towards them ; and commended herself earnestly to their prayers, not knowing if she should ever see them again. At this moment a person entered, to give notice that

six nuns of St. Mary had been sent for by the archbishop, who were to hold themselves in readiness to accompany him that day to Port Royal ; probably to occupy the places of those he intended to remove. The Sœur Anne Eugénie immediately went out to the aged Mère Agnès, to whom she said, with her usual peace and tranquillity, “ My mother, the hour is come ; this is the day of our dispersion : ” then turning to the parlor, where the venerable M. d’Andilly, then aged seventy-six, was waiting for his sister, she said in saluting him, “ Hæc dies quam fecit Dominus.” Immediately after, the Mère Agnès entering said, “ My dear brother, I cannot converse with you, but I came to say with you “ Hæc dies,” which having said, she took hold of both his hands between hers, and said with deep emotion, “ My dear brother, farewell ! we have often conversed together of God ; we must now converse only with God, but often to him of each other. He will be in the midst of us ; He will be present with us ; and when He is present, no blessing can be wanting. Farewell, dear brother ! ” Meanwhile she proceeded, supported by Sœur Anne Eugénie, to the assembled community. Our Mère, Madame de Ligny, had been spending the short time that remained, in reading various letters, which had been written to us during our persecution ; saying “ She thought nothing more calculated to strengthen us ; ” “ Except seeking strength of our Lord himself,” said M. Agnès, entering whilst she was yet speaking ; when with

one accord, they prostrated themselves in silence before Him, calling on Him like Hannah in their hearts, but no voice was heard, tears alone flowed. They called, and the God of peace answered, and revealed himself, by filling their hearts with a peace past all understanding. The venerable Mère Agnès first rose from her knees, and addressing the community, said with a deep humility, which cannot be described : “ My dear sisters, only a moment remains to me ; I wish then to employ it in most humbly asking pardon for all the faults I have committed amongst you ; both in direction, and in all ways. I beseech you to pray God, that he may give me grace to accept the humiliation and deprivation he calls me to. I shall probably see your faces on earth no more. At my age, it is most unlikely I should return. Pardon me then for faults, which towards you I cannot repair ; and give thanks with me to God, that he has permitted me to suffer with you, my dear children, for his truth.”

“ Scarcely had she uttered these words, at which all the community were dissolved in tears, when a sound of carriages and horses, trampling and voices, was heard ; and a messenger ran in breathless, to announce the approach of the archbishop in full state ; with a train of ecclesiastics, constables, and armed men, followed by eight coaches. The grief and consternation excited by this intelligence, cannot be expressed ; tears, cries, and groans, were heard on every side. Every body ran here and there, not knowing

where they went. The abbess was informed, that the almoner of the archbishop wished to speak to her. She went down accordingly to the parlor, where many followed her.

“The M. Agnès returned to her own room, and was just about to kneel down to prayer, when the nuns rushed in, and with one accord threw themselves at her feet, and in tears implored her blessing. She excused herself, saying, “God, my children, is the source of blessing ; he is the fountain of all benediction.” But they still urging her, in great distress, she clasped her hands, and said, “I do, my dear children, with the heart of a mother, who will never see you more, commend each and all of you, to him with whom are all benedictions ;” so saying, she laid her trembling hands on the head of each, embracing each as she knelt before her. But their grief quite overpowering them, especially the young ones, and crying aloud, the Sœur Angélique de St. Jean, then mistress of the novices, and a worthy niece of the M. Angélique, said, “My sisters, God is present, and can you thus despair ?” A bell being now rung in the parlor of Saint Theresa, the Sœur Angélique went down ; she found M. Chamillard, an ecclesiastic of the archbishop. He told her, she should go to the church, to receive the archbishop. She replied, all the community were about to assemble in the choir, and to open the great grate of inclosure ; to hear what it might please his grace to say. M. Chamillard answered, with a look of ineffable

contempt, “What of that my sister? all that show of respect will profit you nothing.” “Sir,” replied the Sœur Angélique, “we wish to consider, not what will profit us; but what belongs to the respect we owe to our ecclesiastical superior.”

“Whilst our mother was speaking to the archbishop’s Almoner, the nuns were all pressing round the venerable Mère Agnès; taking, as they thought, a final leave of her. Some closely embraced her, without having power to utter a syllable; others cast themselves at her feet, where they remained as it were half dead; others recommended themselves to her prayers; and others conjured her to say something to each of them, of which they might retain a remembrance, as of her last words; but what could she say, in so pressing an affliction? or how could she suffice to answer so many? Her actions, or rather her tranquillity, spoke more forcibly than words. Her countenance marked, indeed, intense feeling, but its settled peace was not disturbed; and her force and constancy, the fruits of her long tried and eminent piety, seemed alone to be the stay of the whole community: and when, having paused, to allow a certain expanse of feeling to her sisters she looked round on them with the compassionate tranquillity you know, and said, “My dear sisters, I can only say, rejoice always, and in every thing give thanks; in every thing, once more, give thanks; for from all, we shall reap abundant blessing.” Her words, and the manner

which accompanied them, seemed to touch every heart ; and those who came to mourn, knelt down, enabled to close with thanksgivings, and songs of praise.

“ My sister Agnès of St. Thecla, finding herself animated by this spirit, said to the M. Agnès, that she had often felt confusion in reading the scripture, “ Behold, we have left all and followed thee.” Thinking she had left nothing ; except wealth and a title, and the luxuries of life, which are nothing ; whilst on the other hand, she had gained in that monastery every thing. Her relations whom she best loved, having retired there ; and having found in her new associates, not only infinitely more than she had lost, but more than she had ever hoped for ; and with that, peace of heart and mind : but she now hoped, for the first time in her life, to be favored to be one of those who really leave all which is most truly valuable and dear, to follow Christ.

My Sœur Margaret of St. Thecla, transported by another movement, considered with admiration the guards and constables, who now began to pour into the court yard of the monastery, ready to use force to compel our expulsion, and said, “ O ma Mère, is it possible that we, who are such unworthy disciples, should be sent for ‘ with a band of men ; with swords, and staves, and chief priests,’ just after the manner of our Lord himself.”

The gates then of the great court of the monastery being opened ; the archbishop’s state coach, with others containing his officers, silver cross

bearers, and ecclesiastics, and eight empty coaches, with twenty constables with staves, and eighty soldiers fully armed, and with muskets on their shoulders, entered and arranged themselves round the court, with loaded fire arms and fixed bayonets. Guards were placed at the doors ; and the archbishop alighted from his coach in full state, with his large archiepiscopal silver gilt cross borne before him, his mitre on his head, and his train borne by numerous ecclesiastics.

As he alighted, M. d'Andilly, bare headed, his hair white as silver, threw himself at the archbishop's feet. He had in that monastery six daughters, and had had as many sisters, two of whom, the venerable Mère Agnès, and Eugénie de l'Incarnation, yet lived. And in the burying ground of that monastery, were the remains of his mother and grandmother, both of whom had died exemplary nuns of Port Royal ; and one of whom had bestowed on it that very house. He uttered not a word, but a tear betrayed what he felt on seeing the hour come, when they were, for their constancy in the truth, to be torn from that very house their munificence had bestowed ; and to be immured separately in prisons, in destitution of every thing. The archbishop raised up M. d'Andilly, and took him apart to converse with him. M. d'Andilly said, " He was truly unfortunate to have had a life prolonged until seventy-six years, to behold what he was now to witness." The archbishop replied, " I am sorry too, but they compel me to it by their obstinacy." M. d'Andilly

replied, “ My Lord, there is no lawful thing in which they would not immediately feel it an honor to obey you with the utmost submission ; but in this instance, it is impossible for them to obey, because it is against their conscience to subscribe to an imputation against another, on a matter they know nothing of.” “ Conscience,” returned the archbishop, “ what conscience? have not I resolved all possible scruples ?” M. d’Andilly made no reply, but besought the archbishop to remember the favor he had before promised him, if ever this dispersion should be resolved upon ; viz. “ that he should be at liberty to take his three daughters, and his sister the M. Agnès, to reside with him, at his country seat of Pomponne.” But this, the archbishop declared, could not be done, having resolved to dispose of them elsewhere.

The archbishop then entered the church, followed by all his train, civil, military, and ecclesiastical, and kneeling before the altar, sent one of his almoners, meantime, as was already observed, to advertise our Mère Abbess of his arrival ; and to desire that the gates of inclosure might be thrown open, for the reception both of himself and those of his train he judged necessary.

The Mère Abbess, accompanied by all the other officers of the monastery, and by the whole community, entered the ante-choir to receive him, and the door of the sacraments was thrown open ; when the archbishop entered, accompanied by twelve ecclesiastics, his grand vicar, his official, his almoners, his grand silver-gilt cross bearer,

his secretary, and his notary apostolic. The door being shut, he ordered the community to attend in the chapter house.

“When they were assembled, he began a discourse, by representing his own mildness, and the obstinate resistance of Port Royal, to the decrees of the church ; and after dwelling much at length, on his own long forbearance, he proceeded by declaring, it was now time to adopt other measures ; that he had already interdicted them the sacraments, or communication with any persons without ; but that the day was now come, to imprison the most refractory, and those whose influence might be supposed to extend over the community. He was now come to execute that design, and desired that they would listen attentively to the names of those he meant to take away ; he then repeated the names of the Mère Magdalene of St. Agnès Ligny, abbess ; the Mère Catherine ; Agnès of St. Paul Arnauld, sister to the M. Angélique ; the Sœur Angélique Theresa, daughter to M. d’Andilly, who was to accompany her aunt ; the Mère Marie Dorothée ; the Sœur Angélique de St. Jean, and twelve others, all of whom he ordered to be withdrawn, and imprisoned in separate convents till further orders.

“As soon as the archbishop ceased speaking, our Mère said, “My Lord, we esteem ourselves obliged, in conscience, to appeal against this violence ; and we hereby appeal and protest against it.” All the community joined in one voice, in the same sentiment. “What,” replied the arch-

bishop, “do you protest against your archbishop? take care it is not worse for you! I laugh at all that, protest, appeal, address, do all you will, but you shall obey me!” Then turning to the officers, ecclesiastical and civil, who were with him, he said, “Gentlemen, you know your duty, do it.” The officers at once rose, and seemed about to seize on the nuns; when our Mères, and several sisters rose, and approaching the archbishop, assured him, that they should yield without violence, though without prejudice to their legal protestation and appeal against the legality of his measure.

“All the community then, with one accord, prostrated themselves at his feet, and besought his mercy, representing that he well knew, conscience alone withheld them from obedience, as to the signature; declaring the excess of grief, to which he thus reduced the community, by rendering them orphans; and that he gave the death blow to the Mère Agnès, whose wisdom and piety was in honor in all France: who was in the seventy-first year of her age, and who within two years, had had three attacks of apoplexy. That it was forcing a dagger to her heart, thus to ruin the establishment her late sister had formed: and that God would, at the day of judgment, judge this unjust sentence; and that then our conscience would not fail to be recognized. He mocked again, saying, “Aye, aye; we shall see, we shall see. It will be time enough to settle the right of the business when we get there.”

“ Some of the sisters having thrown themselves into the arms of our Mères, to bid them a last farewell, fearing they might never see them more ; he turned them out of the chapter house, where we were standing, and sent them into the choir, where they remained in prayer.

“ The archbishop then went to the M. Agnès, and our Mère Abbess, whom he reproached : saying, that their own brothers being bishops, they ought the rather to honor the episcopal character in him, by paying him instant obedience, instead of refusing compliance to what the rest of the world submitted. One of the nuns having her packet to arrange, he said in great wrath, “ Why does she not come instantly ? I will have her seized by the neck and heels, if she does not appear instantly.” In short, his anger was so violent, that when his prisoners were assembled, and he bade them follow him out, he even passed the door, which he knew perfectly well, until reminded by the Sœur Angélique de St. Jean, who shewed it him. Our Mère Abbess, being on the threshold of the door, humbly asked the archbishop to inform her, what was her destination ; but the archbishop instead of acquainting her, took her roughly by the shoulder, and pushed her out, answering harshly, “ Get along ! get along ! do not trouble yourself ; it is enough that I know it.”

“ Our other Mères and sisters went afterwards. What most called forth the compassion of those who witnessed it, was the Mère Agnès, who on

account of her great age and infirmities, could scarcely get into the carriage, though assisted by a chair. Yet the tranquil serenity of her countenance, and the constancy exhibited in those of her companions, imparted consolation, even to those who were left behind.

“ M. d’Andilly stood at the door, amongst several friends, to bid the last farewell to his sister and daughter. As he drew near the M. Agnès, to bid her adieu, she said to him in a low tone of voice, but which sufficiently marked her constancy, “ It seems to me, my brother, that as Caiaphas said formerly, that it was necessary, that one man should perish that the nation might be saved ; so now, we may almost say, that one monastery must perish for the truth, that all others may not lose the knowledge of it.”

“ He received also his three daughters, who threw themselves at his feet as soon as they perceived him at the door, in order to implore his last benediction. He gave it to each separately, they not having come out together, with all the tenderness of a good father, but with deep grief. He exhorted them to constancy, and conducted each successively to the steps of the altar, to offer her a second time to God ; it being the same place where he had himself led up each, to make her religious profession. Each time he offered them as living sacrifices, yet how wide was the difference ; at their religious profession, they quitted the world to join a society of the excellent in the earth, and that, a society containing very

many of their own nearest and dearest relatives. Now they were, at one stroke, to be severed both from each other, from every one they knew upon earth, and from all who might be spiritual helps to them. On quitting the church, he accompanied each to the carriage, and helped them in. Indeed, he performed the same good office to all the captives. The ecclesiastic who accompanied my Sœur Angélique de St. Jean, wishing to give her some temporal consolation, she looked down on her scarlet cross and replied, “ I expect no consolation from temporal things, but from Christ alone. We carry the image of his cross on us ; may we bear the impression of its reality within us. In the cross, of which this is an image, I place all my hope.” As the carriages filed off, the archbishop said laughing, “ Well, we have just sent off twelve ; we will now do the same good office to twelve more.” So saying he returned to the choir, where he was much surprised to find the nuns assembled, and the services conducted with as much fervor and devotion, as if nothing extraordinary had occurred. The archbishop then visited the whole of the house and gardens, followed by all his suite, both civil and military ; and after many scenes of similar violence to those already exhibited, he assembled the nuns once more, and declared that having taken away their own officers, he was about to introduce others, under whose control he should for the present place them ; for which purpose he had selected six nuns of the order of visitation, to replace their exiled companions ; and

that they would arrive immediately. Accordingly, about an hour elapsed, during which the archbishop manifested the utmost impatience at their non-appearance ; opening the door repeatedly, calling his people, and commanding that one messenger should be sent after another, till they appeared. He then paced up and down in the ante-choir ; his chair of state was presented to him, but he refused to be seated ; happening to see some of the lay sisters weeping, he exclaimed with great contempt, “ Be silent ! you have no cause to weep, you ought rather to rejoice ; your Mères are taken away because they were heretics, and disobedient like yourselves !” M. de la Brunetière, wishing to apologize for the archbishop, said to the sister Eustoquie de St. Flescelles de Brégy, “ My dear sœur, be comforted, this cannot last long ; his grace, I am sure, however appearances may seem to the contrary, feels more pain at what he is obliged to inflict, than your Mères, who are imprisoned, feel at this moment.” “ I do not doubt it, Sir,” replied the Sœur Eustoquie, “ with respect to our venerable and excellent Mères, they, by the grace of God, only experience a conflict in their natural affections ; but the peace of God is in the bottom of their hearts ; they serve God, and therefore their consciences are at rest.” After some hours spent in scenes of a similar description, the archbishop took his departure for a season, after again having urged the sisters to receive the strange nuns as their officers, which they answered by a positive

refusal to comply, having officers of their own ; and the nuns he proposed sending, not only being illegally imposed on them, since they were not elected by their own choice ; but moreover, being nuns of a different order, they were therefore not even capable of being elected, had it been their wish."

We will subjoin a short extract from the journal of one of the exiled nuns, which is interesting both as exhibiting the spirit of Port Royal, and because it is from the pen of the celebrated Mère Angélique de St. Jean, niece to the Mère Angélique ; and who was afterwards so distinguished as the abbess of Port Royal, in its most difficult times. She was at this period mistress of the novices ; our extract commences at that period in the archbishop's visit in which he had read to the nuns assembled in the chapter house, the list of those he had sentenced to exile ; amongst whom she was one of the principal.

" After M. Péréfixe had done speaking in the chapter house, and had read the list of those he meant to expel ; our Mère Abbess, joined by the whole community, protested against the validity of this ordinance, to which the archbishop angrily replied, " Oh ! I understand perfectly ! yes, yes, you refuse to obey," then looking at his ecclesiastics he added, " Gentlemen, you know your business ;" this gave us to understand, he was about to summon his archers to employ force, as some of the ecclesiastics rose, and went out immediately. Our Mère and some of ourselves then said, that we had no intention of offering any

resistance, and that we were all ready to go out, but without prejudice to the validity of our appeal. I confess that this act of open violence, almost effaced at the moment, all thoughts of the course of conduct, we had determined it would be right to observe in such a case ; and seeing that we were surrounded with officers, soldiers, and priests, who came to seize us with ‘ swords, and staves, and weapons,’ I only thought of uniting myself in spirit to Jesus Christ ; to suffer as he did, and with him in silence, all that it might please God to bring upon us. The first words that rose to my lips, when I entered the choir, where the archbishop had assembled us who were to be exiled, in order to separate us from the community which remained in the chapter, were those of St. Ignatius ; “ Greatly do I rejoice, that I am counted worthy to suffer bonds for Christ ;” and the first movement of thankfulness was so great, that I felt as complete an abandonment of the future, as if I were going that moment to martyrdom ; and were never again to see the house or the persons I was quitting. Indeed, I think I was in the disposition of persons ready to die ; who are ordinarily so occupied with the vast thoughts of that blissful eternity, on the verge of which they stand, that they are no longer engaged with those regrets and yearnings of human tenderness, they once entertained for those they loved best. I considered all my earthly attachments, but as the various parts of the one complete sacrifice I was called on to offer ; which was to be dismembered before it was

consumed ; and I only thought of presenting to God, all the persons I left behind, with the same unreserve with which I offered myself. I had some time to wait, whilst my twelve fellow victims were assembled. After having received the archbishop's benediction, I went out. My father was at the door, in waiting for me. I threw myself on my knees before him to ask his blessing ; it being reasonable he should bless the victim, whom he for the third time offered to God. Then he conducted me to the same altar, to which he led me when I assumed the religious habit, and took my vows. The lieutenant of police was standing at the door of the chapel, and asked my name ; I told him my appellation of religion, Sœur Angélique de St. Jean ; on which he demanded my family name. Some persons near him, said in a whisper, ' She is led by M. Arnauld d'Andilly ; it is one of his daughters ! ' he made a sign with his head, that he knew it well, but he wished to have the pleasure of making me repeat a name, now so odious. I then told it aloud, without blushing ; for in such circumstances, confessing our name is like confessing the cause of God. From thence my father led me to the steps at the rail of the altar ; where I do not doubt but that he sacrificed me to God in his heart, like his Isaac ; for though not his only child, I might just then, perhaps, be in some sense considered so ; as he had just given up my two sisters, who went before me. I silently made my sacrifice on my part also ; when raising my head, my eyes caught

the picture over the door, of our Lord, as the good Shepherd, walking amongst thorns, and carrying his lambs in his bosom. I could not refrain from saying aloud the verse, ‘ Bone Pastor, Panis vere.’ My father then led me to the carriage, with my Sœur Candide le Cerf, Helene and Gertrude, and an ecclesiastic unknown to me. It seemed to me a good presage, that God gave me as companions of my journey, those of my sisters whom I believed were most strong in their faith. We said not a word on the road ; each praying to God separately, and each feeling that the Good Shepherd we invoked, was indeed in the midst of us. I felt but little pain during our journey, my heart being so overflowing with gratitude, at the favor of being selected to suffer such shame for his truth, that I could only sing anthems and hymns of thanksgiving in my heart the whole way ; and amongst others I remember especially, that of the dedication, ‘ Urbs Jerusalem beata.’ Believing we had the favor to be amongst the living stones of that spiritual temple, fashioned indeed separately, and by repeated blows of the hammer ; but every blow of which should square and polish it, till it should at length, in God’s good time, be fitted for its place in the temple of the new Jerusalem above ; of which God is the light, and where sighing and tears are for ever fled away : and where I trusted, I should soon be united with all the beloved company I had left.

“ I was the first who was set down at the convent of Annunciation ; having embraced, and bid a

long farewell to my dear companions ; who waited, while the ecclesiastic, who accompanied me, delivered up his prisoner to the prioress." So far we have extracted from the account of the Mère Angélique de St. Jean. The imprisonment she underwent, her persecutions, and the various feelings she suffered, are beautifully described. She goes on to say, " Being now alone in my prison ; at the end of a long loft or gallery, and separated by four strongly bolted doors and passages, from the inhabited part of the house, I thought it probable my trial might not continue long ; being subject to sudden attacks in the head, which render me insensible ; and which would be fatal did I not receive immediate help, which, in a room so remote, I could not call for. It was however, a sensible relief, after a whole day of such cruel constraint, to find myself alone. As soon as the bolts and bars were shut upon me ; and I heard the steps of my jailor receding through the long passages, and one door locked after another, I prostrated myself before Him, who is present every where, and who led me in that solitude to live with him, and for him. I thanked him for his grace, and earnestly besought him to renew my strength, day by day, for the combat. But when night was come, and I rose from prayer, and was about to lie down on my couch, to seek rest, I felt as if my heart, which had been sustained till then, suddenly fell from a great height, and was broken by the fall. In one moment I felt

overwhelmed, and torn with all the separations I had endured ; and with the sufferings of those I left behind. I in vain tried to turn the eyes of my mind from the view ; my wearied frame and memory refused to obey ; and I was obliged to give free course to my tears ; and to say truth, I shed very many in the course of that terrible night ; in that awful conflict and combat between grace and nature. Having no other arms than the shield of faith to repel, not merely all the fiery darts of the wicked, but all the tenderness of nature : and blessed be God, though my heart was torn, the anchor of faith, sure and steadfast, did hold my soul upon the rock. The storm indeed raged, but I felt sustained, by the deep conviction of the happiness God has attached to suffering for his sake : the advantage there is in losing all, for the kingdom of God ; and to partake of the cross of Christ, that we may likewise be partakers of his glory. The next day, when my jailor appeared to conduct me down to mass ; the first words I heard, in approaching the choir, were, ‘ Those who go forth weeping, sowing precious seed, shall reap in joy, and return laden with sheaves.’ ”

In this prison, the Sœur Angélique was confined for ten months ; often being ten days together, without seeing a creature, except her jailor, who was forbidden to speak to her, or to stay a moment longer, than to set down the bread and water, the only sustenance allowed her.

CHAP. IX.

Nuns of the Visitation.—Doctrine of Implicit Obedience—Port Royal de Paris.—Letters of M. de St. Marthe, to Port Royal des Champs, and to the Abbess of —.

WE return from the exiled nuns to the bereft community of Port Royal.

The abbess and nuns, who held the chief posts in the monasteries of Port Royal des Champs, and Port Royal de Paris, being seized, and temporarily imprisoned in the convents ; that they might be induced, by intimidation and hard usage, to give up the point in contest ; the archbishop of Paris, it may be remembered, had resolved to send other nuns, of the visitation, of the convent of St. Mary, to fill up their places. This he did, partly to seduce the community of Port Royal into compliance by persuasion, or terrify them by authority ; and partly to act as their jailors, and prevent the possibility of their drawing up any representation against this unjust and illegal

usage, and to prevent the possibility, even if drawn up, of such a document finding its way beyond the walls of the convent. Thus were the unfortunate nuns of Port Royal, not only deprived of their own officers ; but, contrary to every rule, their archbishop attempted to compel them to submit to the government of nuns, not elected by their own community, which was necessary to their lawful establishment ; but nuns whom it would have been wholly out of their power, had they been so inclined, to elect ; as they were persons of a totally different religious rule. The nuns of Port Royal were bound therefore, to bear their testimony against this total infringement of their constitution. The strange nuns established themselves at first in the infirmary ; where they only however spent a few days. For seeing they were there too remote to watch over the actions of the community, as narrowly as they had been enjoined, they came out into the body of the convent. The bereft captives meanwhile, spoke to their jailors with the greatest circumspection. They endeavored, by every means, to avoid communication with them ; but when it became necessary to speak, they did so with great respect and politeness, This was the more easy, as they knew those nuns had this odious office imposed on them, without any solicitation on their part, and probably much against their inclination. The nuns of the visitation, on the contrary, used every possible effort, to enter into conversation with those of Port Royal. This was particularly

done, by those more especially charged by the archbishop, with the office of converting, or rather of subverting them ; which these good, but mistaken nuns, conceived to be a very important duty ; and which might much advance the glory of God, and hence they exercised in it much zeal.

The day after the lawful superiors had been taken away, M. Chamillard, a creature of the archbishop's, whom he had also forced on the nuns as their ecclesiastical superior in defiance of their constitution, assembled the bereft community ; and commanded them on the part of the archbishop, to place all the keys of the monastery in the hands of the nuns of St. Mary.

To this the community replied, “ that it would be out of their power to comply ; for that the nuns entrusted with the keys by their lawful superiors, had no power to deliver them up, but into their hands ; nor could they under any circumstances, receive as superiors, nuns not even belonging to their own order.” M. Chamillard seemed much chagrined, and told them they had better submit, seeing they must do so in the end. In the afternoon; the Mère Eugénie, the superior of the nuns of the visitation, assembled the nuns of Port Royal, under pretext of paying her respects to the community ; but with the real intention of executing the designs intimated by M. Chamillard. After embracing some of the nuns, she stated to the Sœur Françoise Claire, who filled the post of tourrière, that she had orders from the archbishop

to place at the turn, in her stead, two nuns she had brought with her; one to attend the turn, and the other to transact all its business with those without. That therefore, she had nothing to do but to deliver up the keys of the inclosure and of the parlors. This the Sœur Françoise refused. In vain did the Mère Eugénie urge, “that their own officers were now taken away, and that consequently they ought to receive whomsoever the archbishop appointed.” The Sœur Françoise replied, “that in the absence of their lawful superiors, although they might willingly receive any persons she might choose out of their own number, which however would be an infringement of their rights, as their officers were elective, they had no power to receive any others.” The Sœur being returned to the turn, found the strange nuns already established there by the Mère Eugénie; she did not however yield up to them the keys, which the Port Royal nuns retained till the 24th of September; but under the inspection of the two nuns of the visitation, who closely watched at the turn, every thing that went in or out of the monastery, and were ready, through M. Chamillard, to give immediate notice to the police. They proceeded to station nuns of the visitation, as centinels in the cloisters and the dormitories: to prevent, if possible, the Port Royal nuns from holding any private communications with their own sisters. Thus were they, according to their own observations, reduced in the space of half a day, to a state of captivity in their own

house. In the mean time, the Mère Eugénie, and her assistants, the Mère Seraphine, and Marguerite of St. Elizabeth, treated the Port Royal nuns with the greatest haughtiness and insolence. One of their priests, M. Bail, observed, “that he thought the Port Royal nuns, had been treated with far too much lenity. That in Italy or Spain they would have been dressed as devils and burnt alive.” Two indeed of the nuns of St Mary, were very different from the other; the Mère Meaupeau and Sourdier. They were persons of contracted minds, yet of amiable dispositions, and who shewed their captives every kindness in their power.

The Mère de Meaupeau especially, was an eminently devoted nun, and her conduct was truly edifying. She was much attached to the nuns of Port Royal; nevertheless, she also seemed to consider that they were greatly mistaken, in not blindly obeying their superior. This nun was aunt to the celebrated Minister Fouquet. During his prosperity she often prayed that something might happen to humble him for his good; and though his disgrace was accompanied with circumstances she could not wish, yet the nuns of Port Royal derived abundant subject of admiration and edification, from the way in which she conducted herself throughout the whole, and more especially during that of his trial. It seemed quite doubtful, whether even his life might be spared. Yet in the midst of this heavy affliction and disgrace, at the advanced age of seventy, her peace remained uninterrupted: and her chief desire was, that all

might be done to the glory of God. Perhaps the sorrows of her own family, made this good mother feel more sympathy for the Port Royal nuns. There is no doubt however, but that it was truly odious to her to be charged, even in name, with such an occupation. She earnestly sought her dismissal, saying that though she could not join in sentiment with the Port Royal nuns, she could yet take no part in augmenting their sufferings. Her dismissal was granted ; and when she went to embrace the nuns, she said to one of them, “ Well my Sister, I only pray God that he may give me the grace to find in heaven a place at your feet.” And indeed, as truth requires that justice should be done to every person, we must add that all the nuns of St. Mary, had they not been placed in such an odious capacity, were well capable of edifying their prisoners in many things. Their love for their vocation, their love for evangelical poverty, their charity to the sick, was truly admirable : though combined with their views, even these virtues proved some of the most cruel means of tormenting their fellow prisoners. For no sooner was any nun taken ill, and more especially if she was in extremity, than these good, but injudicious nuns, took their station at her bed side, and began interminable discussions on their revolts, rebellion against the Pope, heresy against the church, and disobedience to the archbishop. Sometimes with tears, and at other times with threats, assuring her that she would die, without sacraments, and be ever-

lastingly damned as to her soul; and that her body would be thrown on a dunghill and deprived of christian burial. Such were the tender mercies of these nuns to their prisoners. In short, as there are some bodily diseases which preclude persons from the use of their senses; so the notion of obedience, which possessed these daughters of St. Mary, was a moral paralysis, which produced the very same ill effects on them mentally. This notion seemed not only to impede the powers of their souls, and hearts, and minds, but actually to suspend the functions of conscience. To take away the use of their spiritual senses, and to abridge them of the holy liberty which God has not only bestowed, but absolutely commanded his children to use, in discerning between right and wrong; that the one may be adopted and the other rejected. So that these good, but narrow minded nuns might be truly said, “to have eyes and see not; to have ears and hear not; and hearts without understanding.” This delusion was really a sort of soporific, which deprived them not only of enlightened judgment, but even of common sense; so little did they make use of their understandings, in all the actions civil or christian, which constitute a well conducted life. The M. Eugénie especially, whom they regarded as a second Mde. de Chantal, even exceeded all the others in blindness; and had not even those good intervals which were occasionally observed in the others. Blind obedience was her only rule. The practices of her own order her only models; and it would

have been utterly impossible to make her understand the existence of any goodness or holiness, but in the duties of blind obedience. All the daughters of St. Mary were formed on one same model ; all were pervaded by the same spirit ; and all (as might be expected from persons adopting it) were of a very limited capacity. Such were the persons, well intentioned, but narrow and bigoted, whom M. de Péréfixe, archbishop of Paris, most injudiciously established in the place of the Mères de Ligni, Agnès, and Angélique de St. Jean ; to conduct a community, containing a greater number of the most enlightened persons of their sex, the best instructed in general knowledge, and in the grand and solid principles of religion, of any community in christendom. Under this new domination, persons were no longer encouraged to speak of the precious blood of Christ, of the outpouring of his spirit, of the spirit of prayer, of a circumspect walk, and of communion with God, but only of the virtue of blind obedience, and of the duty of signing the formulary ; just as if all religion, and salvation, and damnation, were suspended on believing or disbelieving that the five condemned propositions were to be found in Janse-
nius ; a latin book, which none had probably ever seen, and which certainly, none of the nuns of the visitation could have read.

The opinion of these nuns on the duty of implicit obedience, will perhaps be more clearly understood, by an extract from the ‘ Relations de

Port Royal,' given in the *Lettres Edifiantes*, tome iii. p. 385.

The Sœur Angélique de St. Alexis de Charmont Hecaucourt is the speaker, and is giving an account of a conversation between the Sœur Flavie Passart after she had thrown off the mask, and herself; after having spoken for a considerable time on the duty of implicit obedience, she (the Sœur Flavie) added, "That for her part, she was in the disposition of obeying, without any distinction or discernment at all; and without ever making any reflection, whether the commandment of her ecclesiastical superior were good or bad, because she ought not to pre-suppose, that he would give her any order, which was not conformable with what God required." Upon which I proposed to her the following question, "My sister, if after the death of his grace the present archbishop, another arose in his place, who commanded you to condemn him, or to sign a formulary, declaring the whole of his present conduct to have been unjust and arbitrary, that he was a violent and time-serving man; one who abused his ecclesiastical prerogative, in requiring the signature of a formulary, which is no article of christian faith; and that moreover, you yourself had committed a still greater crime, in upholding him by your signature: would you sign such a declaration?" She answered, "Yes, my sister, I would sign it with all my heart, because I am resolved always to obey my superiors, and it is not my business to discern what they command;

it is their concern to enquire if what they do, and command to be done, be right or wrong ; but my only part is to yield them implicit and prompt obedience, nor can I sin in obeying them.” “ But, my sister,” rejoined I, “ supposing there arose five or six archbishops of Paris, one after the other, each of whom in his turn, commanded you to undo and condemn the act his predecessor had ordered you to perform and to approve, what would you then do ?” she replied, “ My sister, if fifty archbishops of Paris succeeded each other, I should always obey the command of the one in office.” I answered, “ But, my sister, what then is your foundation ? it is not God, for you serve other Lords before him ; nor are you led by the Spirit of God, for God has no variableness nor shadow of turning ; whilst, on the contrary, you are ready to change with every wind of doctrine ; a sure test of those who rest on frail man, instead of the immutable Lord ; and who follow false teachers, instead of the Spirit of truth, the appointed teacher of the church.” She answered, “ I hold to perfect obedience, and that is all.” With these words she went away ; whilst I answered, “ Would it not be well, my sister, not merely to hold perfect obedience ; but to see, that this perfect obedience, be yielded to God, and not to man.”

Such were the opinions of the Sœur Flavie ; and as it appears, by the numerous relations of Port Royal, such were those of the ecclesiastical party whose tool she was.

The difference of sentiment between the creatures of the court party, under the dominion of the Jesuits, and the Port Royalists, on these subjects, will plainly appear by the following letter, from the venerable M. de St. Marthe, one of their confessors.—*Lettres Edifiantes*, tom. i. p. 15.

January, 1664.

“ My Sisters,

Do not fear all the threats which may be made, concerning briefs and bulles, or all the mandates you may receive, whether by the authority of the pope, or that of his grace the archbishop. St. Paul says, ‘ The end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.’ 1 *Tim.* If then, you have every reason to believe this commandment to be contrary to charity, and if you recognise that it does not lead to purity of heart, and that it does not accord with a good conscience, and that it does not spring from a faith unfeigned ; how should you imagine you ought to conform to it ? A lively faith is inseparable from purity of heart, and from a good conscience, as the Apostle says. Never forget that you will soon weaken yourselves in the faith, if you neglect purity of heart, and if you sacrifice a good conscience. The same Apostle teaches us, a little lower, in instructing his disciple Timothy, he commands him to preserve faith and a good conscience ; and he adds the awful caution, that ‘ Those who have neglected or put away this good

conscience, have soon concerning faith made shipwreck :’ adding, that Hymeneas and Alexander were amongst such, they would be excommunicated, and delivered over to the power of Satan. Hence my very dear sisters, very far from fearing excommunication, so long as you remain faithful to the dictates of conscience, you ought, on the contrary, to fear lest God should abandon you, if you should be unfaithful ; and lest he should punish you, by allowing you to fall into errors against the faith ; and so far from being able to excommunicate you, whilst you maintain this exact fidelity, remember that on the contrary, St. Paul would have excommunicated you, if you did contrary to a good conscience, although commanded by men so to do ; and one may say, that in the sight of God, you would by so doing, have excommunicated yourselves. Whereas, if you remain in an humble firmness, in the state in which he has placed you, you can neither fear excommunication nor any other evil ; because as we have seen, true faith is inseparable from purity of heart, and the answer of a good conscience, and that from the love of God. Now it is written, ‘ That all things shall work together for good, to those who love God ;’ that is to say, to those who preserve themselves in this purity of heart and love : and all that can be done to those who really abide in these divine virtues, cannot injure them, but on the contrary, we are assured by revelation, that all must work together for their good.

Moreover, my dear sisters, let us console ourselves in the Lord ; and in a sure trust that he will not abandon us. The persecution you suffer places you in the rank of the early christians ; and be willing, and think yourselves honored, in being called to partake of the same sort of sufferings they endured. For believe me, it was a deep suffering to have the sorrow of seeing their brethren fall ; you must expect similar trials, but let us seek to imitate them, in their firm and humble faith. If these things humble us, in making us enter into a feeling sense of our own nothingness, surely they likewise fortify us, since there is no other strength, than that which is founded on that deep self-abasement and humility, which may lead us to dig deep, and build upon the rock of ages himself.

Always propose to yourselves the examples of the primitive christians. They had to bear false brethren. They were tried by many who denied the faith, after having embraced it ; and who abandoned the truth, after having known it. This it was, which occasioned the apostle to exclaim, “ O foolish Galatians, &c. &c.” You must extend your charity to those who fall, since Jesus Christ commands us to imitate God his Father, who makes his sun shine on the good and on the evil : and in the numerous little vexations they may occasion you, you must exhibit to them your patience, which is the fulfilment of charity, according to the word of the apostle, “ In patience possess ye your souls.”

God is just in all his judgments, and what we suffer both *is*, and when seen truly *seems* to us far less than we deserve. We ought to esteem ourselves too happy, that though in the midst of the furnace he sustain us ; whereas, those truly to be pitied, are the unhappy persons, who, delivered over to the blindness of the natural understanding, and impenitence of the natural heart, persecute the church of God. And if he permits some of your sisters to fall, while you stand, let none glorify herself on that account ; but seeing her own danger, in the lapse of those who once walked with her, as fellow-pilgrims, let her cleave more closely to the Lord, and if she thinketh she standeth ; take heed lest she also fall.

Hence my dear sisters, we pray continually for you, that he may render you worthy of your high vocation : that he may make you more and more able to perform the duties of a religious calling, and to conform to it, not only as to fidelity to its rule, but faithfulness and cheerfulness under the sufferings and persecutions in which he has engaged you.

Rejoice and be exceeding glad, &c. for in this consists your glory. And we also ask for you, with the same apostle, that he should accomplish his good work in you, and finish the work of your faith in him : that Jesus Christ may be glorified by you, and you in him ; for that is all to which we must pretend.

If we have any thing more to wish for you, it is to beseech you, as that great apostle did with re-

gard to his disciples, “ Ut non cito moveamini a vestro sensu ; neque terreamini, neque per spiritum, neque per sermonem, neque per epistolam.” Do not be terrified, do not be troubled. And with the knowledge and light it has pleased God to afford you, whether briefs are handed you, or bulles fulminated against you ; whether discourses are held to terrify you, or casuistic subtleties to ensnare you ; or although those who would mislead you, boast that they are led by the Spirit of God ; do not be astonished, for the apostle predicted all these things would happen. But then, he adds at the same time, that they should succeed only against those who should perish ; and who had not received the love of the truth in their hearts. By which he marks, that there can be no salvation independently of a love of the truth, which is the bond of all true faith, and living charity.

Thank God, that he has vouchsafed to chuse you, as the first victims of this persecution against his truth ; thank Him, that he has bestowed on you that knowledge of the truth, now so rare, which may render you a blessing to his church ; and that he has crowned it, with those persecutions, which may issue in your own sanctification, and in the glorification of your redeemer. This grace is so great, that we cannot be sufficiently thankful for it ; and we are wholly unworthy of such a favor, if we do not appreciate his having called us to a participation of his sufferings. Let us then abide firmly, by a thankful humility, in

the state to which he has called us. And now, may the Lord bless and keep you. May the Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you, and give you peace, even that peace in believing, which passes all understanding ; and which as the world cannot give, so neither can it take away."

A few days after the entrance of the Mère Eugénie, she demanded the constitutions of the order, that she might read them, and assume the reins of government, without being obliged at every moment to ask for assistance from those she was to govern, and accordingly supposing that the twelve who were taken away, comprehended all the persons of talent in the community, and that she should find no difficulty in subjugating the rest, but be able soon to intimidate them, she began to issue her orders in the most authoritative manner. But she soon found herself mistaken. It was calmly and respectfully observed to her, that so long as she staid, they wished to shew her every respect, which could be paid to the most distinguished visitor ; but that their officers being in existence, though absent, they could not elect others, and still less form a precedent so contrary to their rules, as obeying one not of their community. The nuns then, without acquainting the M. Eugénie, proceeded to elect temporary substitutes for their officers, amongst themselves, and obeyed them in all things, as though their own abbess had been at home. Every day the M.

Eugénie undertook some new encroachments, particularly that of holding the assembly and the chapter. This the nuns resisted for a considerable time, but hearing it was intended to imprison many more of their number, it was thought it would be more expedient, to remain together in their monastery, than to cause the loss of more of their number, by resisting what was, after all, a mere form, by which they did not feel bound. The nuns being then all assembled to hold their first chapter ; the nuns of St. Mary entered, and the Mère Eugénie declared she alone should hold it, notwithstanding all their representations of the illegality of their proceedings. The Sœur Françoise Agathe, sub-prioress of Port Royal, and consequently their head, now the others were taken away, then rose and said aloud, “ My sisters, the Mère Eugénie is about to hold the chapter, but without prejudice to our appeal, and acts of protestation against it.” About the same time, the M. Eugénie took in the choir the place of the Mère Prioress, as she had done in the refectory : and she did attempt to assume that of the abbess, till the Sœur Genevieve de l’Incarnation told her, that she could not, under any pretext, assume the rank of a titled abbess. From that day, the nuns of St. Mary attended all the offices. They always, however, manifested the greatest inquietude, when any of their prisoners, especially those who wrote with elegance, were absent. Because it had been especially recommended to them, to use the utmost precaution and vigilance that their pri-

soners should not be enabled to communicate together, to draw up any protestation, or appeal to the law ; or that if drawn up, it should never find its way out of the walls of the house. Nevertheless, all their vigilance, united with the perfidy of the Sœur Flavie Passart, did not prevent the nuns both from holding communications without, or receiving necessary advices from time to time ; which enabled them to unveil, in *proces verbaux*, the crying injustices, which their persecutors wished, by every means, to conceal from the public.

Whilst the M. Eugénie endeavoured, by a union of force, stratagem, and ever wearying and renewed contentions, to render herself mistress of the house, and to establish her pretended superiority, the Sœur Flavie, like an evil genius, unobserved and unsuspected, glided amongst her sisters ; insinuating herself into their counsels, all of which she betrayed, under the guise of being herself one of the most determined on their side. To the community, she always appeared as a saint, ready to bear testimony to the truth before the archbishop ; whilst she was in reality plotting with him, how to betray them.

Thus were the saints of Port Royal, like the apostles of old, in perils of false brethren. And this trial was more deeply felt, than all their others. Their sweetest consolation, till the time their mothers were taken away, was the perfect peace and union that reigned amongst themselves. The demon of discord had now entered in. And

He who had permitted, that there should be found one Judas amidst the apostles, permitted that there should also be found a traitor in the house of Port Royal ; that his handmaids should be favored to drink of the same cup with their Lord ; and show this trait of conformity with their divine master. It is time to unveil this new mystery of iniquity.

The imprisonment of the abbesses, had opened all at once, a new perspective of ambition. The nuns of St. Mary, could only be at Port Royal for a season. Being of a different order, they could never remain its legitimate superiors. If she stirred up the nuns, with all her power, to make remonstrances, *proces verbaux*, &c. ; she might, she imagined, easily succeed in establishing the resolution of the archbishop, to give Port Royal a new superior, and keep the old ones imprisoned for life ; and if she herself became subservient to him, and was useful in revealing their plans, and exhibited her talent, of which she had a large share, who so likely to gain that envied office as herself? Nay, the archbishop would be compelled to yield it to her, as the only nun of the order, and of the same community, he could permanently substitute for the exiled abbess. Her part was then, to enter into the views of the archbishop secretly ; and to make her talents appear to the best advantage, in endeavouring to gain over some proselytes to the same views, from amongst her weaker sisters ; whilst in the mean time, under the most profound mask of dissimulation,

she entered into all their counsels, to betray them ; and to urge, under the appearance of zeal, all those nuns who were distinguished for talent, and who might be her rivals, to such steps as might seal their disfavor with the archbishop. Accordingly, she expressed to the community her great sorrow, that they had not used more forcible expressions against the formulary ; and taxed them with expressing too much respect to their ecclesiastical superiors. She then urged them to more zeal, and to set them at defiance. She assisted them in secretly drawing up a very decided *proces verbal*, and several other pieces ; but on the day of signature, she was very opportunely as usual taken ill, and prevented from herself signing it. When the pieces were once sent forth, she as suddenly recovered ; and bitterly bewailed having been prevented from adding her signature.

The nuns were however not long without receiving advice that they were undoubtedly betrayed by some one of their own number. Accustomed however to judge favorably, and being indeed themselves only suffering because they would not pass a rash judgment, they could not persuade themselves the intelligence was true. So that a friend of theirs, M. Doamloup, having called and asked the Sœur Genéviève de l'Incarnation, who being their elder took the place of abbess, in what state the nuns were, she answered "that they were all firm." But M. Doamloup spoke to her in a manner which convinced her that he was persuaded otherwise : on which the

Sœur Genéviève again said, “How sir can you doubt it? It seems to me that there are none of our sisters, would not prefer dying to offending God.” About the same time, the Sœur Euphrosine said also with deep grief to the Sœur Genéviève, “My sisters, I have seen his grace the archbishop, but I am sure that there must necessarily be one traitor amongst us, who reports to him every thing, because he knew exactly, all which passed in the interior of this monastery, in the time of our Mothers. It is truly deplorable, but I assure you, that nothing has here been resolved on or transacted amongst ourselves, in the most profound secrecy, of which he and M. Chamillard are not immediately informed, and that of councils at which the nuns alone have been present.” These circumstances, combined with various others, did not fail to impress the Sœur Genéviève, and persuaded her that a party was by degrees forming, and a division gradually taking place amongst themselves; and disunion spreading in the very heart of the community. Several sisters entered into her views, and circumstances daily occurred, which appeared to place their conjectures beyond all possibility of doubt. But who could be the guilty individual, they could not even conjecture. Their state of suspense was almost unsupportable. The total ignorance and uncertainty, as to those who might or might not be implicated; its necessary consequence of infusing the greatest distrust of each other, rendered their situation most afflicting. Each of the poor nuns, was obliged to con-

centrate her grief in her own bosom, lest she might be addressing herself to some concealed enemy.

When it was necessary to deliberate upon the affairs of the community, they were constrained to speak before those, who listened only in order to betray them. Thus were they reduced, neither to be able to communicate their affairs in public nor in private, without an inevitable danger of being betrayed. If their resolution was worded in a manner too soft and respectful, it only afforded their enemies hold upon them. If, on the contrary, it was too rigorous, they were treated with still greater harshness. If they did not consult together, they were exposed to the evils of not acting in concert : if they took mutual counsel, they were assuredly betrayed. Thus did they continually walk between contending difficulties. Situations however did occur, in which they were compelled to exhibit their genuine sentiments ; and to shew the respect which they owed to their legitimate, but exiled superiors ; and to mark by their conduct, that they could neither recognize the M. Eugénie as their superior, nor M. Chamillard as their director. This firmness exasperated their jailors to the greatest degree ; and they began to publish on all sides the foulest calumnies, not only against their doctrines, but even against their characters. M. Chamillard most falsely insinuating on all sides, that they were abandoned to the greatest disorders, and had cast off even the form of religion.

Meanwhile, the Sœur Genéviève determined to use every means to discover by whom they were betrayed. She therefore divided the whole community into three bands, placing over each a nun, whom she could thoroughly trust. These bands were to read and consult together, at different times and places, and on different subjects, and the three heads were afterwards to confer together. The reading consisted of pieces sent by their friends, for their consolation and edification ;^a the Sœur Genéviève justly thought, that by observing which of the bands had its proceedings divulged, they should in process of time find out the traitor ; resolving, in case her plan succeeded, to subdivide that band again, and so on, till they discovered the individual.

Accordingly, one day when about twelve nuns were assembled, reading a letter of M. de St. Marthe, the Sœur Flavie gave notice of it to the M. Eugénie, who made them a rigorous reprimand. Whilst all this trouble distracted them within, M. Chamillard assailed them without, by establishing conferences and sermons, the whole of which consisted of homilies on the duty of passive obedience, the danger and sin of disobedience. His discourses were most frequently one tissue of invective against themselves, interlarded with the most injurious epithets, and calumnious tales of their imprisoned friends and superiors ;

^a One of these we will insert at the termination of this chapter, by way of specimen.

comparing them to every rebel, heretic, and schismatic, who had ever troubled church or state, from the time of Cerinthus, to that of Madame Guion. He closed his first harangue in these terms : “ You think to be martyrs ? so you shall be, but to the devil ; and instead of a crown of glory, your portion shall be the flames of hell ! ”

At the third of these conferences, the nuns, not thinking it right to assist in thus profaning the pulpit, which ought to be the oracle of truth, nor yet choosing to hear such atrocious calumnies against their imprisoned Mères and Sœurs, mostly rose and departed. The fanatical preacher became so incensed, that he broke off his discourse, and quitting his place, rushed to the grate which separated him from the nuns’ choir, and transported with fury, shook and struck it with all his force, exclaiming with a voice of thunder, “ Those who go out, shall never be received to communion more ; they shall die without sacraments, and be thrown as carrion on a dunghill. There are canons excommunicating all who go out whilst the word of God is preached.” On this the Sœur Flavie, trying to detain the Sœur Angélique of St. Alexis of Charmont Hecaucourt, hypocritically said, “ Alas, my dear sister, had you not better stay ? what if you should be unhappily excommunicated ? ” The Sœur Alexis answered aloud and firmly, “ The canons of the church do excommunicate those who go out when the word of God is preached. But this is not the word of God. Let the word of God be preached, and we will listen.”

After the conference, M. de Chamillard sent for the Sœur St. Eustoquie de Flescelles Brégy, and abruptly addressed her thus : “ You too, I suppose, were one who went out ? ” She replied, “ Indeed, Sir, you do me injustice ; I did not. ” On which he began praising her, and wishing the others to follow her example ; to which she replied, “ Indeed I wish so too ; for then not one would have been present, in the first instance. ” From that day, most of the nuns withdrew from his conferences and his confessional, both of which became deserted ; and M. Chamillard found himself a priest without a flock. His complaints, added to those of the Mère Eugénie, and to the reports of the Sœur Flavie, who assured them that the nuns would rather die than yield, determined M. Péréfixe to exert himself, to devise some new and more effectual measures.

The persecuted nuns, meanwhile, had demanded and obtained, on the 10th of September, letters of chancery, by which it was permitted them to cite the archbishop of Paris, and all who were concerned, to answer before the parliament of Paris, for the part they had taken in the illegal measures they had perpetrated, and the violences the nuns had endured. These letters were signified to the archbishop, M. Chamillard, and the intruding nuns, on the 15th of the same month, with the assignation to parliament. The bereft community of Port Royal then imagined themselves on the point of obtaining justice. But it was easy for one, who had so strong an interest as

the archbishop, in not having his violence and illegal proceedings condemned, to prevent the nuns from obtaining justice ; and the archbishop obtained a decree of the privy council, by which the king interdicted all knowledge of this affair to parliament, and transferred it to the hands of his own council. Now, as M. Péréfixe had taken the part he had, simply in compliance with the views of the king, it was easy to foresee the termination of any proceedings, before the royal council.

About this time, the duplicity of the Sœur Flavie became apparent. Some years before, and in the midst of their persecutions, she had had a long conversation with Mlle Perrier, M. Pascal's niece, and who had been one of her scholars, (the same who was the subject of the miraculous cure,) respecting the signature of the formulary. The Sœur Flavie expressed great fear lest the nuns should yield, and had besought her to ask from M. Pascal, her uncle, instructions for herself ; that she might both sustain herself, and fortify her sisters ; and she earnestly and reiteratedly besought her to obtain a writing to that effect. The demoiselle Perrier asked M. Pascal, who complied with reluctance, and on the express condition that no copy should be taken ; that the Sœur Flavie should communicate it to no one ; and that she should restore it in six weeks. She did indeed restore it, but not until after she had shewn it to M. Chamillard, the emissary of the archbishop of Paris, who took a copy. This

happened in 1662. Three years after, that is in 1665, a work appeared of Père Annat, in which that Jesuit adduced long extracts from the MSS. of Pascal. Then the demoiselles Perrier went to the Sœur Flavie, and reproached her with her treachery, which she could not deny. They also taxed her with having betrayed the house, by revealing its councils, and adding much of her own, and thus obtaining from the archbishop, the exile of the sixteen principal nuns, to the end that she might be chosen abbess herself; to which reproach they added another, respecting Mlle. de Roannés, whose banishment she had occasioned by her calumnies; that lady having, at the Sœur Flavie's instigation, received a *lettre de cachet*, exiling her to Poitou, and when the Duke of Roannés her father, enquired the reason, he found it was this nun, who having accused her of resisting the formulary, had been the means of her disgrace. It has been observed, that the nuns, instead of holding one full chapter, determined to divide the council in three divisions, and to treat of different matters at each. They soon observed, that the division whose councils were revealed, was always the one in which was the Sœur Flavie. Whilst, however, they were yet in some doubt, it was clearly discovered who the traitor was. The archbishop having one day brought copies of some of their archives, the treachery of the Sœur Flavie was apparent; as she was at that time procuratrix, and had the sole care of the papers, and consequently no other person could have

shewn them to the archbishop, This was the signal for the most cruel persecution.

The Sœur Flavie now completely threw off the mask, she watched them from every corner, established the strange nuns as spies over them ; inimical persons, nay, even persons of infamous character, were posted at all the turns, so that they could hold no communication from without, but through their enemies. Jesuits were sent to them as ecclesiastics, to denounce damnation and threats of excommunication ; their gardens were given up to a party of soldiers, established there in defiance of all decorum as a guard ; so that the nuns could not walk out, but were wholly confined to the house. Meanwhile the heat of the summer was intense, and the garden being occupied by soldiers, a contagious fever broke out in the monastery ; death succeeded to death ; the sacraments were refused to the dying, and even in the agonies of death, they were terrified with threats of excommunication ; the unrelenting Sœur Flavie, the twelve strange nuns, and the ecclesiastics, going from room to room, to terrify and entangle the consciences of their victims, and to insult them in their last hours. Meanwhile at length, six out of the hundred nuns, yielded to the artifices and persecutions used, and signed the formulary ; amongst whom were two nuns who had for four years been in an imbecile state ; with one other on the point of being expelled for bad conduct ; and a fourth, and afterward the most celebrated, the Sœur Dorothée

Perdreau ; a person of pious feeling, but very limited understanding. She was of low origin, and of very moderate fortune, and was received by the Mère Angélique gratuitously ; who nobly gave the whole of her portion on the day of her profession to the Sœur Dorothée's brother ; sending him her contract torn to pieces. This nun, after being much entangled in conscience, yielded ; and from that hour, became the passive tool of the Sœur Flavie : who, after many months, finding that the imprisoned nuns did not yield, nor the community submit, and being now unmasked, began to fear what might be her situation, should the abbesses return. In order then, both to accomplish her ambitious projects of seeing herself the head of a community ; and also to screen herself against the return of the nuns, who had been exiled ; she suggested to the archbishop, the idea of separating Port Royal des Champs from Port Royal de Paris ; and of placing the six nuns, who with herself had signed the formulary, in Port Royal de Paris, constituting it a separate community, and of electing an abbess from amongst those nuns ; not doubting, but in that case, the choice would fall upon herself. Thus unjustly did she excite the archbishop to wrest from these nuns, what the bounty of the family of Arnauld had bestowed on the community ; and thus did she propose to take for seven nuns, one third of the provision destined for above one hundred and thirty. No sooner was this design formed, than the Sœur Flavie resolved

vigorously to push it on. In her character of procuratrix of Port Royal des Champs, she had the care of all the stores ; she therefore profited by rising even by two in the morning, and surreptitiously sending out, day by day, carts loaded with stores of every description, to the monastery of which she hoped soon to see herself at the head. Furniture, house-linen, provisions, clothing, stores for all the obediences, all was pillaged. The nuns of Port Royal des Champs, were in great astonishment at seeing their house thus dismantled, and were wondering to what it was to tend ; when a mandate of the archbishop, contrary to all observances of law, declared the nuns of Port Royal des Champs, deprived of any votes ; and called on the seven nuns of Port Royal de Paris, to proceed to an election. Meanwhile the Sœur Dorothée, very inferior in capacity to the Sœur Flavie, gradually became wearied of being the tool of her ambitious sister, nay, even the nuns she had overawed to her purposes, dreaded the Sœur Flavie's intriguing, overbearing, and meddling spirit ; and the archbishop himself, who had so often had recourse to her services, had now seen sufficiently of her character, to think it would be more conducive to peace, to place no more power in her hands. So that as the time of this unjust election drew nigh, the Sœur Flavie was astonished to find her tool the Sœur Dorothée, whose mediocrity she had so long despised, named as her rival ; and instead of continuing subservient, using every means to thwart her, and

bear away the triumph on which she had so long set her heart ; and to obtain which, she had committed so many crimes, and acted so treacherous a part.

Thus did the phantom elude her grasp, for which she had for years practised a course of calumnies and double dealing ; for which she had immured in a close prison, and deprived of the necessities of life, some of the most excellent of the earth ; those to whom she owed her bread : for which she had succeeded in wresting from them their possessions, and caused them an imprisonment, the severity of which had occasioned a pestilential disease, in which many had died, persecuted by her until death ; deprived of the sacraments of their church. Accordingly, when the election took place, the Sœur Dorothée Perdreau was unanimously chosen. And thus the reward of all the Sœur Flavie's treachery, was to find herself fixed under the absolute domination of her own tool ; a person she cordially despised, and who hated her for her former tyranny. A person equally weak and obstinate ; and who, like many others of that description, had no greater pleasure than in wreaking her vengeance upon her, by every sort of petty mortification. And instead of finding a friend in the archbishop, he informed her in the most cool manner, " That he had never entertained the least thought of making her abbess ; for which her intriguing character entirely disqualified her." Thus did she find herself, completely over-reached, and all

the pains she had taken, in surreptitiously abstracting furniture and moveables from the monastery of Port Royal des Champs, only served to aggrandize her bitterest personal enemy. When she reproached the archbishop and the ecclesiastics, telling them it was by her unwearied industry and cleverness alone, they had gained their point, they coolly replied, “Many may profit by treachery, but all abhor the traitor.” Such was the only comfort this poor sister obtained from her friends.

Meantime the Sœur Dorothée was as much elated, as the Sœur Flavie was cast down. She usurped the place of abbess with a high hand, and the assumed importance weak minds attach to honors. On the very day of her election, she admitted six new postulants, collected with great pains by the archbishop ; but the next day, when their instruction was to commence, she found herself strangely at a loss ; knowing nothing either of latin, or of the principles of music. She was then obliged, with much shame, to call in a vicar of Notre Dame, to instruct them ; and it was with the greatest difficulty, on the festival held on her inauguration, which succeeded a few weeks after her election, that a motet was most wretchedly performed, to the derision of all Paris, whom the archbishop had unadvisedly invited to grace the ceremony. Meantime, the Sœur Dorothée finding herself rather at a loss in the duties of an abbess, thought it necessary to veil her deficiencies, by surrounding herself with

all the pomp which could be assumed. She therefore had state apartments fitted up for herself; kept a separate table, and in every respect took upon herself all the honors that could be arrogated by a titled abbess. Meanwhile, the Sœur Flavie Passart continually acted as a thorn in her sides; using every means to render her despicable and ridiculous in the eyes of her new community. The abbess Dorothée on the other hand, knowing by experience her intriguing spirit; began to fear she might in turn prove the victim of similar plots, to those in which she had been a tool; and in order to watch over the Sœur Flavie, she stationed herself at the turn, to scrutinize all that went in and out of the monastery; nor did she at all seem to consider how derogatory was such a mode of proceeding to her station as abbess; nor the derision and contempt, to which this strange mixture of state and meanness exposed her. From day to day, the new abbess seemed more and more perplexed. Wholly inadequate to the duties of her office; hated by the only person of talent in the community, and who, as her unsuccessful rival, spent her whole endeavors in tormenting her: unable to enforce discipline; now trying to obtain respect by unwonted state; now meanly watching lest plots should be formed against her; alternately treating her community with harshness, and conceding every thing in vain, to conciliate: such was the life of this wretched abbess. Meanwhile, the Sœur Flavie's state was no less miserable. Out-

witted by the ecclesiastics, whose dupe she had become ; and by the stupid Sœur Dorothée, her own tool ; hated by the whole little community, she had by her artifices gained over ; but who with one voice reproached her for the thraldom she had led them into ; and who were obedient to the Sœur Dorothée, only in tormenting her ; she was yet worse used by the abbess, whom she so heartily despised, than by any of the others. Her high spirit was completely borne down, and she was reduced to such a state, that she did little but weep from morning till night. Yet she was not happy enough to see the hand of God ; and to recognize that it was a just punishment for all her prevarications and her treachery ; or rather a warning voice, to lead her to repentance. She had imprisoned her mothers and her sisters. She was the cause of unjustly turning out her legitimate superiors and benefactors ; and the just God to whom vengeance belongeth, and who punishes men by their own crimes, permitted her, by her own machinations, to throw herself into a thraldom, and under the dominion of one who became her scourge. Thus the inhabitants of Sichem, after having slain the seventy sons of Gideon, who had exposed his life to deliver them from the Midianites, chose for king, Abimelech, a base person ; who was, to the very individuals to whom he owed his ill-gotten crown, a devouring fire. Three, out of the seven nuns who had joined the Sœurs Flavie and Dorothée, were so miserable under their tyranny, and so tortured by

remorse, that they found means to interest their relations at court, for their emancipation ; and obtained a mandate for their return to Port Royal des Champs. The others, who were of less note, were less fortunate ; though equally wishing their escape. Meanwhile the greatest dilapidations took place in the revenues of Port Royal de Paris. The abbess to conciliate the public, and to unite her refractory community, was continually giving magnificent entertainments ; nay, she even gave a ball in the exterior of the convent. The disorders of their finances, urged them to fresh pursuits against Port Royal des Champs ; but after much litigation on the part of the clergy, the king refused to ratify their unjust claim, saying, “ If Port Royal de Paris chuses to give a ball, Port Royal des Champs shall not be taxed to find fiddles.”

The archbishop having now succeeded in wresting the house of Port Royal de Paris, from that of Port Royal des Champs, and having established the abbess Dorothee in the former ; determined, since nothing more was to be gained by further contention, to separate the two communities entirely, and to remove to Port Royal des Champs, all the nuns from whom he could not obtain the signature of the formulary. In pursuance of this resolution, he determined to send back all the nuns he had imprisoned in different monasteries, who were twenty-three in number ; and also those who were in the house of Port Royal de Paris, when the abbess Dorothee and her six

nuns took possession ; these nuns were thirteen in number.

Before we proceed to the account of their return, we will close this long chapter, by one, amongst the large collection of excellent letters written to the community of Port Royal, by their pastor, M. de St. Marthe, during the captivity of the nuns, and his own exile from his flock.

*Letter from M. de St. Marthe to the community
of Port Royal des Champs.*

October, 1664.

“ My dear Sisters,

The blessing of our Lord Jesus Christ ever abide with you ! Your present state calls you, in an especial manner, to humble yourselves under the hand of Almighty God, as under that of a good father who chastens you in mercy, and for your benefit. For he chastens every child whom he receives into his household, and for whom he prepares his inheritance. Be content to endure all manner of affliction, provided he be with you in those afflictions. Rejoice that for his sake, you lose every earthly possession ; since without doubt he will give himself to you, in the place of all that he deprives you of. Does it rend your heart to be torn from the counsel of your spiritual mothers, and the society of your sisters ? Remember, that the very wound it inflicts is sent in mercy, and in order to heal you. Be patient under the means by which your heavenly Father

sees needful to break your bonds to earth ; submit to the correction of what may yet remain too human and earthly in your affections ; in order that your charity may become thoroughly purified. You will love God more undividedly, your affection for your mothers and sisters will be more holy ; and remember that perfect love to God, and perfect love in him to his creatures, is the complete health of the human soul. Learn to say with St. Paul, that you glory in being attached to the cross with Jesus Christ your Lord ; and may you be enabled to go on to say with him, that no person is able to separate you from Jesus Christ. Love to endure the yoke of Christ ; a yoke which is never borne, without a greater weight of blessing. And if at any time it should appear to you hard to support, do not delude yourselves by repining against its apparent weight. Recollect it is the sickness of the soul, not the heaviness of the cross, which makes it hard to bear. Seek then divine help, to increase your love ; cast off the burden of earthly attachments and passions ; these are the real causes that bow you down, and debilitate the soul. Wait then, my dear sisters, upon the Lord ; then shall you ‘ mount on wings like eagles, you shall run and not be weary, you shall walk and not faint.’

Jesus Christ whom you love was crucified ; he whose disciples we are, ‘ became obedient unto death ; even the death of the cross.’ Will you not then suffer all creatures to unite in crucifying your

sins; when your sins conspired to crucify him who was without sin? Those to whom God has given power to persecute and oppress, have only power allowed them to perform that work upon his children, which the love of God sees is requisite. It is their office to try us by fire, ours to endure the purifying furnace. If we love not the world, we should surely be well content that the world should not love us.

Courage, my dear sisters! submit in faith to the crucifixion of spiritual, as well as of natural delights; for even in that did our Lord set us an example. If during the long and weary hours of a close imprisonment, your Lord appears occasionally to withdraw his presence, and to leave you like the spouse in the canticles, who sought her beloved and could not find him, because of the darkness of the night, possess your souls in patience, until his return; till the sun of righteousness rise, above the limited horizon of your view, with healing in his beams. Jesus Christ does not really abandon you. The more he is concealed from your view, the more intimately does he enter your heart. Without inspiring sensible joy, he will yet prove your assured strength, and your eternal salvation, your shepherd, your redeemer, your deliverer; the wonderful, the counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, and prince of peace. He will fight with you, and you will triumph with him. “*Confidite; ego vici mundum.*”

Since then no persecution can befall you, but in accordance with the views of a God of love con-

cerning you, it is a contradiction in terms, for a disciple to feel any thing but love and kindness to those who are the instruments of fulfilling the will of God in his behalf. Let us then manifest our sincere union with the designs of God, by loving those *visible* enemies, who are amongst the most powerful instruments in helping us to detect and and conquer our *invisible*, who are our only dangerous enemies.

In order to profit by the ill-usage you may receive, beseech of God, that no vain anxieties may interrupt the tranquillity of your communion with him; and that no want of charity, may disturb your love for your persecutors. Once more in your patience possess ye your souls; not that you should yield a culpable and blind obedience to your temporal or ecclesiastical superiors, when they require of you that which is contrary to conscience; rather imitate the holy angels, who remained steadfast in the faith, though Lucifer their superior, commanded their revolt; but then like the holy angels, be steadfast, not resisting even Satan with railing accusation, but by adhesion to God in a spirit of love and of submission. The christian conquest, is a conquest not of force of arms against your brethren, but by intensity and fervor of divine love.

Fear not, though persecution should rage, that you should seem to have no place whereon to lay the sole of your foot. Jesus Christ your Lord, though the foxes had holes, and the birds had nests, had not even where to lay his head. Nor

yet be astonished, though every place of outward worship should be shut to you. If we have no religious house wherein to seek Christ on earth, he will even come and dwell in the temple of our hearts, and abide there as master of the house. Nothing is so little, as an humbled and contrite heart; and yet nothing is so exalted, since God has declared that he dwells there in all his majesty. Nothing is so poor, as he who has nothing on earth; yet no one so rich as he who possesses God. “*O humilitas augusta tibi ampla salvatori.*”

The name of a prison appears indeed horrible, but if the holy spirit abide there with us, he will bestow on us the liberty of children of God. If truth enter with us, and increase in us, it will deliver us more and more from the father of lies. If for Christ's sake, we are as it were slaves of the injustice of men, we shall have the consolation of seeing the chains of our sins broken, and thus become the freeman of God. The wicked carry their prison about with them wherever they go; because their own heart is a dark dungeon, their passions adamantine chains, and scourges to the soul; whilst on the contrary, those whom Jesus Christ has delivered, and who have renounced the world, experience the liberty of the children of God, even in the midst of bonds.

Jesus Christ is come a light into the world; and those unhappy persons who love the world, and prefer darkness to light, have their eyes so blinded by earthy mists, that whilst persecuting the children of God, they cannot see the gulph which

yawns beneath their own feet ; their heads are so intoxicated with worldly pursuits, that they are insensible of the dizzy height on which they stand, till their feet slide, and they are dashed from precipice to precipice, till the abyss finally closes over them. Whereas if the eye be single, Christ will be a light amidst the darkness of the gloomy dungeons. Let us then believe, that the happiest spot for the christian, is not always that which to sense appears brightest ; but rather that in which he is the most frequently compelled to cast himself upon the strength of God only ; and where outward circumstances, by affording him the most frequent exercises of humility, charity, and patience ; yield him most facilities for practising the tempers, and receiving the impress of the likeness of his divine master. When therefore you are beset by trials, seek not to escape from the hand of him who has attached you to the cross ; but rather say to him, with the humble but fervent love of Israel of old, to the angel who wrestled with him ; ‘ I will not let thee go except thou bless me ! ’ The way of tribulation, is the way of the kingdom ; walk you in it. If the ground of your heart be harrowed by the good husbandman, expect in patience the abundant harvest ; ‘ Confidete in Domino et mane in loco tuo. ’

Whilst however you maintain love for your persecutors, be not shaken from your steadfastness, either by their mistakes or subtleties. A disciple, thanks be to God, is not called to waste his time and strength in unravelling the long and intricate

web of sophisms, elaborated by false teachers ; the test applied by our Saviour is simple and compendious, “ by their fruits ye shall know them.” When spiritual teachers resort to courses of conduct and proselytism, not only unprecedented in scripture, but wholly opposed to that practised by the apostles ; we have solid ground for believing that the doctrines themselves, which demand so different a method of promulgation, must also be different. Now the apostles never resorted to force or to any worldly incitement either of pleasure or pain, to compel the will. They never persecuted nor flattered the world, to make it renounce its errors ; but they suffered persecution of the world from those errors. In the case both of the great shepherd himself, and of those immediately sent forth by him, they laid down their lives for the sheep : but it is without example, to find shepherds commissioned by Christ, slaying their sheep, under the pretext of exercising the charge of lawful pastors. Beware then of the doctrines of those whose practice is so wholly opposed to that of the Lord they profess to serve. Such practices, are those the world was wont to use against the church, not those of the church against the world. Now neither the world nor the church change their natures. Where then we see worldly practices resorted to, we may safely conclude that it is not the spirit of Christ, but that of the world in disguise which has crept in it, which is the agent ; and that for the gratification of its own purposes, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, or the

pride of life, she is for a time assuming the mask of that church, to whose vitality and spirit, she is the most deadly and irreconcilable enemy.

It remains to say something of my own disposition, that you may pray God for me. God knows my weakness, which is no doubt the reason he has not yet appointed me to severe combats. However whenever he sees fit to call me out, I trust he will become my strength. If I have not been found worthy to give you the first an example, I trust I shall be enabled to follow yours; and as you have been ready to lay down your lives for the truth, I am encouraged to hope, that I too may be ready to lay down mine for you.

We seem to me, just now placed very much in a similar predicament to that of the church in the time of the emperor Julian. This apostate caused his statue to be erected in a place of public resort, and in the midst of several idols. Now soldiers were required in passing, to salute the image of the emperor. Christian soldiers then found themselves in a double difficulty; if they saluted the emperor, they passed for idolaters, and were cast out by the christians. If they refused, they were executed by the magistrate; not as christians, but as traitors to the emperor.

Yours, my dear Sisters, in our Lord,

With much consideration,

ST. MARTHE.

Will the reader permit us to insert one other letter of M. de St. Marthe; it was addressed to an

abbess who had adopted the reform, and was in correspondence with Port Royal. It is by no means particularly connected with the history of that house ; excepting so far as it exhibits the spirit of their pious director ; it is inserted here, simply because it appears to contain advice so universally valuable and applicable, that it was thought it might prove both useful and acceptable.

Letter from M. de St. Marthe to the Abbess of L.

“ My Rev. Mother,

If I have not hitherto spoken particularly to you of your own spiritual state, it has not arisen from any wish to dissemble painful truths ; but solely, from not being aware that I had any thing to communicate on the subject : and I think it against the order of God, to make an effort in our own will and understanding, officiously to execute as his minister, a commission with which he has not truly charged us ; or to deliver in his name, that which is not really his message.

But the office I at present hold in relation to your house, having latterly laid your spiritual state upon my conscience ; I will now simply note down a few observations, which have arisen in my mind, whilst bearing you on my heart before God, in prayer ; leaving them with you to accept or to reject, as his spirit, the alone effectual guide into all truth, shall direct you.

Let me, however, previously offer a few remarks, on the mode of receiving spiritual advice. It

often pleases God, not only immediately to enlighten us by the teaching of his spirit, without any outward instrumentality; but likewise often mediately to instruct us, through the instrumentality of his servants.

When he who is the truth itself, vouchsafes to become our immediate instructor, it is obvious that the instruction must be perfect; and that it needs no consideration on the part of his fallible creatures, to know whether it is to be adopted, or with what limitation. But the case is far different when that teaching is conveyed through the medium of men.

When spiritual advice is conveyed even through the most eminent of his servants, though the treasure is of God, it has passed through the channel of an earthen vessel; and therefore acquires always more or less tincture therefrom. Hence, whenever we receive instruction from our fellow creatures, we should carefully weigh it in the balance of the sanctuary; lest, on the one hand, we reject the message of God, because of the unsuitable form in which it may be conveyed; or lest on the other, we prove guilty of leaning on an arm of flesh, by hastily adopting, unexamined, advice, a large portion of which may not be intended for us. God reserves to himself, the thorough knowledge of every heart. He alone can provide every one his meat in due season; and that which is offered by the best of men, must after all be weighed and selected by him who receives it; lest he should on the one hand rashly reject

much that may be valuable ; and on the other as rashly adopt, a great deal which is irrelevant or unsuitable.

Before then I proceed to give advice, I beseech you to weigh it in a spirit of prayer.

Having thus said, how it appears to me, that the advice of christian brethren should be received ; I will freely say, that it seems to me, that your principal error consists in bearing yourself towards the sisters with less condescension and kindness than you ought. You are apt to feel impatient when they do not at once enter into your reasons, or readily adopt your superior lights ; and you sometimes remain too much surprised, may be perhaps a little grieved, at the occasionally reluctant submission you find in them.

May I not say to you freely, that this defect arises from a root of that very pride which caused the heresy of Pelagius, and which it is so difficult to eradicate from the human heart. Although we possess a full internal spiritual conviction, that the grace of Jesus Christ alone can effect the conversion of the human soul ; yet the self love of fallen nature makes us feel, as if our words were sufficient to convert hearts and to eradicate the besetting sins and evil habits of those over whom we are placed. How is it, that when it needed an operation of grace from above to change our own hearts, that we should so easily flatter ourselves, that it is enough that we speak to correct the faults of those who are under our guidance ? And how can we so soon forget the superhuman power, and the long

suffering, necessary to influence us ; as to be surprised whenever we have said something to enlighten them, to find them still wandering in darkness ? When it required the beam of the sun of righteousness, to enlighten us ; ought we to wonder, that it should require more than the dim taper of human illumination, to enlighten them ? This secret sentiment of pride and self love, which imperceptibly lurks at the bottom of our hearts, is the cause that we occupy ourselves too much in condemning the weakness of others ; and we forget those means by which we really ought to co-operate with God in their salvation. We talk, and exhort, and reprove, beyond measure. But do we pray and mourn for them in secret ? We do not sufficiently wait for God, and seek not to go before his hour. We do not feel a charitable patience for the weakness of feeble souls ; and we do not take a sufficiently maternal care, not to impose on them burthens, which they cannot yet bear ; and which would only serve to overwhelm them. Sometimes again, through the same unwatchfulness, we leave them in their infirmities through our negligence ; and omit telling them truths, when God has really opened their ears to hear ; and when they are truly hungering, we do not mind to present them with solid bread to make them grow. It follows from thence, that not considering the faults of others, with the charity we owe them, we easily slide into a pharisaic spirit. We feel so much impatience at the faults of our sisters, only because we flatter ourselves we have

not similar ones ; whereas, perhaps it is our self love only, which prevents our seeing and condemning them in ourselves, in a still greater degree.

You must consider my mother, at the age you have attained ; the respect in which you are held, and the obedience which is accustomed to be rendered to you, form so many evils, concealing many defects which might otherwise appear in you, if you were reduced to the level of those who are subject to you. And besides, whatever virtue you may have, christian humility should make you consider all the faults of those you direct, as though you had yourself committed them. For since you have nothing of yourself that separates and distinguishes you from the most imperfect : since you have within you, the very same root of corruption and frailty ; you will allow, that you cannot without presumption, profess any advantage above others. If it be true, that we who hold spiritual offices, exercise our ministry after the example of Jesus Christ ; we shall charge ourselves with all the sins of our community ; and esteem ourselves not less obliged to grieve over them, than those who have in person committed them. And as we are ourselves members of the same body, with the most imperfect of our sisters ; and still more, if we are the heads of that body, we shall be animated at once with the same desire for their perfection, we feel for our own ; we shall exercise the same patience in their infirmities, we do under our own ; and we should have a sedulous

care to mortify that natural activity, which leads us to irritation, rather against persons, than against their sins. If it be true, that we have a solid and sincere desire to serve souls ; the first thing in which that desire will appear, will be, to avoid all faults or weaknesses in ourselves, which may place any stumbling block in the way of those we lead ; and which might render our corrections useless, because we do not give them in the right manner ; because they are not given in wisdom and in love ; and because we rather follow our own natural inclination and spirit, in administering them, than the teaching of the Spirit of God. Do not fear gentleness, if you are truly faithful. Whatever may be our gentleness, if it proceeds from a true christian charity, we shall not have the less force, in mortifying those who need it : but we shall have more light to do so in the manner, and according to the mind of Jesus Christ. We shall afflict them, and strike them for their benefit ; and we shall at the same time hold them by the hand, and sustain them, lest they should fall into discouragement ; or into a cross, untoward spirit, which would make them resist instruction. And now my dear sister, that we may have a perfect pattern of the line of conduct to pursue towards them, let us observe that of God, the Holy Spirit, the true teacher of his church, in reproof, in consoling, and in admonishing us.

I have no doubt, my dear Mother, but that you have charity enough, to well receive, what I pro-

pose to you so freely ; and even though I should be mistaken in many points, I doubt not but your humility will receive that which may be suitable in what I have said ; and that you will kindly do me the same good office ; that we may both be followers of that Lord, who not only washed his disciples every whit ; but commands them daily to wash each other's feet, as they pursue their pilgrimage here below.

CHAP. X.

*Journal of the Mère Angélique de St. Jean.—
State of Port Royal des Champs.—Excellent
Letter of M. de St. Marthe, to the community
of Port Royal des Champs.—Recluses.*

THE division having been effected between the monasteries of Port Royal de Paris, and Port Royal des Champs; those nuns who had been exiled by the direction of the archbishop, were to be recalled. They had now passed ten months in a rigorous captivity; separated not only from each other, but imprisoned in the communities to which they were sent, and allowed to hold communication with no one. The venerable Mère Agnès, however, on account of her advanced age, and frequent apoplectic seizures, was allowed to have one of her nieces with her. Their captivity was now to terminate; or rather their captivity in foreign houses, was to cease; and they were to be reunited in their own monastery of Port Royal des

Champs. We will extract from the Sœur Angélique de St. Jean's account of her return.

“ I had fully persuaded myself that our long exile would terminate in the tomb, when on the fourth of July, at nine in the morning, the abbess, M. de Rantzau, came to pay me a visit, and told me with a joyful countenance, that she brought me good news ; and that the Abbé de la Motte was just come from the archbishop, to know if I should like to visit the Mère Agnès, at the monastery of St. Mary, from which I might perhaps return to Port Royal des Champs. My astonishment was almost beyond belief. So that I could only say, I was ready for whatsoever the will of God appointed ; for the news seemed so bright, that I feared to believe it ; supposing it was a snare to enhance our disappointment, and fearing lest its bitterness, should prove an occasion of falling. After dinner, the M. de Rantzau returned to sit with me, and shewed me the greatest affection, saying with tears in her eyes, how wretched it was to have been compelled to become my jailor ; and rejoicing in the hope of shewing me every kindness, as long as I might yet stay. I thanked the community for all the kindness they had shewn me : at which those present blushed ; but I am sensible they did all their orders allowed. As I knew they had long wished to learn modelling in wax, I offered, now they had liberty to converse with me, to teach them the art. And as I had many preparations to make for my return, I determined to sit up all night to arrange my own

concerns, that I might be at liberty to give them this pleasure next day. This day I devoted to finishing a reliquiary I had begun for them ; and to making them a wax crucifix, which I did not finish till nine at night, when I retired to my cell to pray, and to say complin ; after which I proposed making my little preparations, which I had scarcely begun, when I heard many footsteps approaching my room. The hour had long since struck, at which the nuns go to bed in summer. I could not imagine what it could be ; when the door opened, and M. de Rantzau appeared, holding a candle in one hand, a paper in the other. I rose to meet her, when she said with great surprise, (and I think feeling,) “ My sister, an almoner of the archbishop is just arrived with a coach, and here is his order to convey you away immediately.” I confess I was not a little surprised at being sent for at such an unseasonable hour. I made haste to collect my papers and clothes ; in the mean time, the officers of the monastery who were already in bed, very kindly rose to bid me farewell, and notwithstanding all my remonstrances they would accompany me to the door. When I entered the court, they saw it was already dark, and they did not like to allow me to traverse the streets of Paris at such an hour. M. de Rantzau begged me to enter into the choir, whilst she went to the ecclesiastic who was to accompany me, to request him to defer my departure till morning ; I then entered the choir, and prostrating myself anew in spirit before the

Good Shepherd, under whose care I had placed myself at the beginning of my exile. I said with all my heart, “ Though I walk the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil, for thou art with me ! ” There are indeed many darknesses to be feared in this life, far more terrible than external darkness, through which we may nevertheless walk with assurance of not falling, when His grace accompanies us ! Soon afterwards the Mother called me, and said, there was no way of deferring it, that the archbishop insisted on my going immediately ; she then said how sorry she should be to part from me : I threw myself at Madame de Rantzau’s feet, and begged her pardon and that of the community, for any trouble I might have given them ; M. de Rantzau embraced me with the utmost tenderness and affection, as did likewise all the other nuns ; they then opened the door. An ecclesiastic and a female received me, and I stepped into the carriage with them. I knew where I was going, but was unacquainted with the road ; nor could I discover where about we were, for it was pitch dark, nor were there any lights, excepting here and there a candle in the shops we occasionally passed. When we had proceeded a little way the coach stopped. The ecclesiastic got out. I perceived we were at the gate of a convent, and I concluded he was about to bring me a companion ; but as I did not know in what part of Paris I was, it was impossible to guess who it was. We waited above three quarters of an hour. Not a word had yet been spoken

by any of the party ; at length the lady broke silence, by observing, “ It was a very undue hour to conduct nuns, but that it could not be otherwise, as the archbishop returned so late from St. Germain.” I replied, “ Madame, it is but fit that nuns should be as ready at all hours to obey the will of God, as their ecclesiastical superiors are to obey the will of the court.” “ Alas Madame,” replied she, “ few except the inhabitants of Port Royal, could suffer so much, so cheerfully.” She then embraced the opportunity of the ecclesiastic’s absence to say, “ that it was well known no other persons would have endured with so much constancy, and that whatever the court party might do, the world at large espoused our cause.” I cut short this discourse, wishing to spend this time in silence and prayer, for which I had full leisure. At length, the moon rising in cloudless majesty in the heavens, and her peaceful light gilding the silent and solitary streets, I could not but recollect that beautiful promise of God, that “ The sun shall not smite thee by day nor the moon by night ;” I felt that he had preserved me from evil, and above all, that he had preserved my soul ; and I trusted that He who had watched over my going out, would also sustain me by his grace, in my going in, and that from this time forth, and even for evermore.

After waiting a long time, the ecclesiastic returned ; accompanied by a nun, whom he seated in the carriage beside me. It was too dark to recognize either her countenance or figure : but I

had no time to doubt who it might be, for she threw herself on my neck, exclaiming, “O my dear aunt!” I replied, “my dear child.” This was every word we spoke at this interview, and during the whole way ; but these two words from the abundance of the heart, sufficed to make us know each other, and to fill our hearts with consolation ; of which the first principle being spiritual, though it was also natural, was first to be enjoyed in gratitude and silence before Him, who was its first object and its true cause. This experience made me understand, what Mary Magdalene felt at hearing herself called by her name by Jesus Christ, whom she took to be the gardener, and the answer which she made, in saying the single word “Rabboni !” Certainly this mutual recognizance includes all in a truly spiritual friendship. How often the multiplicity of demonstrations and of words, injures the principle of true joy and satisfaction, by troubling the heart and disturbing the action of thanksgiving, which should be first rendered to God, in order to consecrate wholly to him, the first fruits of a rich harvest sown in so many tears. Then indeed, I began to feel my heart overflow with joy. I had before both supposed the news of our liberation doubtful, and also feared, lest I might learn some of my sisters had fallen through the severity of our persecution, and the rigour of their confinement ; but the joy at once more meeting that dear child, whom God had sustained in so terrible a trial, especially at her tender age, inspired me

with such good hopes that all my fears vanished, and I only thought of praising God, who gave us such sweet earnest of his great mercy, and who began to bind up our wounds, by restoring us to each other.

The remainder of our journey was very long, or rather tedious. We were six in number ; we felt almost suffocated with heat, in our serge religious dresses, and shut up in the month of July in a coach, all the windows of which were closed. The night seemed darker and darker, as the hour became later, and the candles in the shops were extinguished. We had neither flambeau nor lantern ; so that in many places it was so completely dark, that we all fully expected, we should be overturned every moment. I searched my own heart, to discover if I felt any alarm ; but it seemed to me a folly and contradiction to dread any thing, when the conscience has no reason to fear death. For if we had been overturned, or murdered by the banditti, who at this time infested Paris, we should, after all, have died as certainly in obedience to the appointment of God, as those martyrs whose death is so much more glorious before men. After all, true peace must consist in peace of conscience. The true light which lighteneth every man which cometh into the world, is the alone light, which no outward storms and tempests can extinguish. When that light is burning, the wise virgins need not fear the obscurity of night ; nor will the lion that goes about seeking whom he may devour, be

able to gain advantage over them ; whereas when the oil of interior peace is wanting to a soul, because of unfaithfulness to God, it trembles, even when there is no ground of anxiety. The darkness of her conscience, at one and the same time, leading her to fear men ; yet rendering her insensible to the tremendous danger of offending that God, in whose hands are the lives of all his creatures.

Thus we proceeded, each silently conversing with God, in her heart, during the whole way ; which was prolonged to two hours and a half ; because we both proceeded slowly, and met with several serious detentions. For when we reached the gates of the city, we found them shut ; and were obliged to wait till they were opened, which detained us some time. We were again kept waiting much longer at the gate of the convent of St Mary, in the suburb, where we had to remain above half an hour, before the *tourrières* of the convent were roused from their slumbers ; after which they had to wake the nuns, before they could get at the keys of the outward gate, leading from the street into the exterior court of the monastery. Whilst we waited, I unexpectedly heard a bell, which I immediately recognized as that of the Carthusians, which struck the second stroke for matins ; that is, it was eleven o'clock at night. I cannot describe my joy at hearing this bell, I had so often heard in our house at Paris ; and thus discovering, that I was in the immediate vicinity of our poor desolate Zion ; of which I had

neither seen or heard any thing during the time of captivity in which I wept by the streams of Babylon. After a considerable time had elapsed, the great gate was opened; and the carriage drove into the court of St. Mary's, where we had another long station to perform. For the nuns, who had not the least expectation whatever of our arrival at such an hour, were not so soon ready to receive us; and being all in bed and asleep, it required some time to dress, for they do not sleep in their clothes, as we do. At length they made their appearance; so that just before midnight struck, and before the day of visitation ended, they received this extraordinary midnight visit; the pleasure of which was greater to us than to them; though we must bear full testimony to their great charity, in the lively interest they manifested in the extreme joy of their prisoners, at this emancipation. It was the mother superior herself, and five or six other nuns, who came to meet us at the door. So many events, and so many feelings crowded on the heart and mind, that I cannot in the least recollect what either party said or did; I only know, that all which the kindest hearts can exhibit of sympathy and joy, in the happiness of others, these good mothers abundantly shewed; and indeed they exhibited much more joy than I did, my own heart being troubled with conflicting hopes and fears, as to what might follow, and the state in which we might meet our exiled sisters. But all my suspense vanished. I forgot all thoughts of bonds and imprisonment when I beheld our two sisters,

who were imprisoned in this convent, freed, and running to meet us at the door. It was not till after I embraced them, that I learnt that one of them was actually then suffering from a fever, (though she quitted her bed to see us,) and that our dear and venerable Mère Agnès was altogether confined to her bed, through the hardships, and deprivations, and anxieties, undergone in the long period of their imprisonment. I seemed at once to receive from God an hundred-fold for all we had endured; and I longed to go up to the Mère Agnès, who was looking forward with equal pleasure, to once more seeing me her niece.

We first however, went to the altar, to pour out our hearts in mutual thanksgivings; for how could we ever sufficiently thank that good shepherd, who not satisfied with pouring out his life for us, had guided and watched over us during our captivity, and who had now sought us, and reunited us to each other.

From the church we went up to the room of the Mère Agnès, who received me with a joy, like that with which holy angels receive souls escaped from the snares of the evil one, and let loose from the prison of this world: I shall not attempt to relate, either her feelings or my own; no words can convey them adequately. The good mother of St. Mary, took a sisterly part in our joy; but after a little while very kindly left us, to pour out our hearts to each other in full liberty. They wished however, first to prepare us beds, but I told them, that I had already taken measures to stay up all

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false reports circulated about her, which had torn
my heart, it was indeed a deliverance. After bid-
ding her a good night, it was the turn of my other
sisters. They both crowded round me, and told me
all that had befallen them ; their persecutions,
deprivations, and the support they had received.
From them, I first received the joyful tidings of
the firmness of all our sisters ; of the constancy
and noble conduct of my companion, the Sœur
Magdaleine Christine, of which I knew not a word ;
of the constancy and generosity of our holy
bishops ; above all of M. d'Alêt, whom amongst
others, my persecutors had tried by every means
to make me believe had abandoned the truth, and
was armed against us. Then news was first told
me, of the multitude of our friends, whom God
had not only preserved in truth but raised up to
defend it, and to justify our innocence by public
apologies. On hearing these joyful tidings, of
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who were imprisoned in this convent, freed, and running to meet us at the door. It was not till after I embraced them, that I learnt that one of them was actually then suffering from a fever, (though she quitted her bed to see us,) and that our dear and venerable Mère Agnès was altogether confined to her bed, through the hardships, and deprivations, and anxieties, undergone in the long period of their imprisonment. I seemed at once to receive from God an hundred-fold for all we had endured; and I longed to go up to the Mère Agnès, who was looking forward with equal pleasure, to once more seeing me her niece.

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night, before I knew I should spend the night in their house ; and my sister Magdaleine Christine, said she should also sit up.

It was past midnight, and these good mothers knew we were to set out very early for Port Royal des Champs ; so that we had only just time to exchange greetings, and to realize their reunion. Indeed it was like a dream. I sate a little with the Mère Agnès, but did not stay, for at her great age, sleep and rest were absolutely necessary ; but I found her so full of grace and strength, that after my long anguish at our separation, and all the false reports circulated about her, which had torn my heart, it was indeed a deliverance. After bidding her a good night, it was the turn of my other sisters. They both crowded round me, and told me all that had befallen them ; their persecutions, deprivations, and the support they had received. From them, I first received the joyful tidings of the firmness of all our sisters ; of the constancy and noble conduct of my companion, the Sœur Magdaleine Christine, of which I knew not a word ; of the constancy and generosity of our holy bishops ; above all of M. d'Alêt, whom amongst others, my persecutors had tried by every means to make me believe had abandoned the truth, and was armed against us. Then news was first told me, of the multitude of our friends, whom God had not only preserved in truth but raised up to defend it, and to justify our innocence by public apologies. On hearing these joyful tidings, of multitudes whom I had been falsely told had

fallen, with a view to shake me ; and after having long imagined, like Elijah, that I alone was left to worship the God of our fathers ; my heart was overwhelmed with joy, as when the Prophet learned how many had not bowed the knee to Baal. But I could say nothing, but to God ; and tears of joy and thankfulness, alone shewed the almost painful excess of joy, at his great goodness, in having not only reunited us, but preserved our souls. I was so overwhelmed, that at every new tidings, I was ready to say, it is enough ! for it seemed more than my frame could bear. For all was as new to me, as though I were risen from a sepulchre ; after being buried in profound solitude for ten months, and my sisters could not refrain from tears, when they found how rigorous my captivity had been. So that I resembled those poor christian slaves, liberated from the Turks, who recognise nothing in returning to their own country, but have to learn all that has taken place since. As for me, I knew nothing, not even the most public pieces of news ; indeed things almost forgotten by the public, were new to me. I knew nothing of the establishment of strange nuns in Port Royal des Champs, nor of the horrible conduct of the Sœur Flavie, nor that Port Royal de Paris was wrested from us, and erected into a new monastery. Yet amidst these news of temporal losses, was the rich recompence of learning the spiritual strength and health of my dear sisters ; so that I seemed borne down with the full tide of blessings, and I knew not how to be thankful enough, for having sustained me under

the false information, continually brought me, of the defection of those amongst our sisters and mothers we most valued.

Completely overpowered by these conflicting feelings, I consented, as I was importunately urged, to lie down a little ; not that it would have been possible to sleep, but I needed to breathe a little, and to pour out my heart to God in silence, as a necessary relief, in the overwhelming riches of natural and spiritual joy he had heaped upon me ; so that the presence even of those dearly loved and newly restored friends, seemed almost a restraint, till I had poured out the fulness of thanksgiving to him who is above all friends. I accordingly threw myself on a bed, which the kindness of the mothers had prepared, and rested for about three quarters of an hour ; after which I rose and hastened to write a few lines, to the various dear, and tried, and faithful friends who had done so much for us : and borne so much with us : to acquaint them with the joyful news of our deliverance.

Meanwhile my Sœur Angélique Thérèse, who had a feverish complaint, and our dear Mère Agnès slept, and my Sœur Magdaleine Christine was employed in packing for them. After this, we all said matins together ; and I know not how it was, but there was not one word in the office, which did not seem chosen expressly for us ; as if to lead us to praise the mercies of God, which indeed seemed in one tide, to fill and overflow all our hearts, and souls, and senses.

Day soon came, as I was still writing ; when the nun who attended the Mère Agnès, came to ask how we were ? and to invite her new guests, to see the house and gardens of the convent, which are particularly beautiful, and which they took us to see thus early, thinking we might be sent for. In short, they seemed by every civility and kindness in their power to shew the great affection and esteem they felt for us, and how truly joyful they were, at being emancipated from the odious task of being our jailors. They took us to visit their cloisters, the chapter house, the community room, the refectory, and their kitchen. All are very handsome, in excellent order, and as much ornamented as may be allowable in a religious house. We afterwards proceeded to the garden, in which is a calvary and a magnificent sepulchre. We had not however leisure to stay there long ; for we almost immediately heard the bell of the turn ring loudly, and a messenger appeared to inform us that an almoner of the archbishop was arrived, to escort us immediately. The carriage, he added, was waiting ; and that as no time was to be lost, we were commanded to come without the least delay. It was then half-past five in the morning, and the M. Agnès was not yet risen. She however rose hastily, and came down immediately ; for they allowed us no time to take leave of any person, except the few nuns who happened to be at that moment accompanying us. The Mère Superior, who had very kindly prepared breakfast for us in the refectory, constrained us however to take some

refreshment. We then took leave, on both sides with every mark of affection and civility; and I who had only been with them six hours had more thanks to give than the others; having received nothing from them but the most attentive kindness and sympathy. Our sisters who had been imprisoned there, had indeed other treatment to remember; but they too had every reason to think it was as painful for these mothers to inflict, as for them to suffer.

The Mère Agnès then entered the coach, with her four daughters, accompanied by a tourrière of St. Mary. The almoner of the archbishop escorted us on horseback. We began our journey by saying *prime* together; the office being ended, I pulled out a little bible, bound in one volume, which I always carry about me; and handed it to the M. Agnès, who opened it, to see what it would please God to give us. These are the words which presented themselves; and which he declared to his church by one of his prophets, who perhaps saw us in spirit, amongst the vast flock, ransomed by the blood of the divine and good shepherd. “Woe to those shepherds, who destroy and tear the flock of my pasture, saith the Lord. Therefore, doth the Lord, who is God of Israel, say to those shepherds, who lead my people; you have dispersed my flock, ye have driven them out, and ye have not visited them. But as for me, I will visit on you the malice of your hearts; and I will assemble the remnants of my flock, from all the places where you have dispersed them; I will bring them back to their own house; (in our case

Port Royal des Champs) and they shall grow and shall multiply. I will establish over them pastors, who shall guide them ; they shall no longer apprehend any thing, or have fear, nor shall any one of their number perish.”

Can any one, who believes in a particular providence, doubt that every, even the most trivial rencontre, is not fortuitous ? Who, in the whole range of the old and new testaments, could have discovered a passage more literally applicable to what had already passed in our community, and to the present occasion of our return ? We did indeed feel, that God was now beginning, by our restoration to Port Royal des Champs, to assemble the remnant of his flock ; that is, all who through his mercy had escaped from so many perils and temptations, by the power of his grace. which alone had rendered them stedfast and immovable. Those also, who had for a time fallen under the power of the enemy, had been snatched from his hands, by that good shepherd who does not allow one of his sheep to perish, which the Father has given into his hand. O how great is the strength and protection of his grace, to them who look to him only.

After proceeding a little more than two miles, it appeared that one of the horses had lost a shoe which made him go lame. We were however obliged to proceed at a foot pace, as far as Chattillon, to the nearest blacksmith. There we were detained a considerable time, which at first appeared a very unseasonable interruption, but we

soon found in this little circumstance, as in many others more important, that what retarded our journey, enhanced our joy. For mean time, our other sisters, exiled in different houses in Paris, and who it appeared, set out rather later than ourselves, had time to join us. When we unexpectedly perceived the first carriage near at hand, and all the white dresses and bright scarlet crosses, which shewed in the winding of the road, a little way behind, it is impossible to describe the transports of joy of both parties. As we were stationary, the carriage soon overtook us, and passed on ten or fifteen paces before us. All we could do, as it drove quickly by, was to salute each other, with a mutual exclamation of joy, which came from the inmost heart, and which could not be suppressed. This carriage was followed by another, and then another, and another, so that there were in all seven. They drove by so fast, that we could only distinguish those who sat next the door on our side; for though they longed equally with ourselves, to have some communication, M. le Madre, who escorted them on horseback as the prisoners of the archbishop, would by no means suffer it; and ordered all the carriages to file on before us, excepting the last, which counting ours, made the seventh. This carriage always remained behind, and stopped to wait for us, which it did the whole way, for we had very poor horses; and although it might have continually passed us, it always remained to bring up the rear; going on and stopping just as we did: the mystery of which


we did not then penetrate, not knowing whom it contained.

We then proceeded, still forming a file of seven coaches. It was a delightful procession ; for every one who formed a part of it, praised God, and followed the cross of Christ. Thus we went on, without meeting, till we past Jouy : where at the brow of the hill, we first descried the spire of our beloved Zion, so deeply mourned, so long and so earnestly desired ! Here, the road being difficult, at the long and steep descent to the abbey, the carriages drew near to ours ; and here it was we first saw and spoke to each other for one little moment : but what could be said in such transports of joy ? I know not, to what to compare the spectacle of the multitude, standing up in their carriages, and stretching out their hands to each other, and making exclamations of joy at the sight of the Mère Agnès whom they had so often been threatened they should never behold again ; and seeing me amongst them, after the very feeble expectation they entertained, that I should ever be allowed to return ; it put me in mind of the resurrection from the dead, as our close and weary solitary imprisonment, had of their long sepulture. But after the first confused exclamations, the first intelligible words that could be heard, were praises and thanksgivings to God. who had so mercifully sustained us in steadfast fidelity to the testimony of his truth ; and who already repaired our sufferings an hundred fold, by the great joy of this reunion. It was indeed, of all consolations, the greatest we

could desire, after our cruel separation. It was yet an enhancement of happiness, as we from time to time glimpsed amongst the number of our sisters, those whom we best loved ; or those whom we thought they would certainly have withheld from us ; especially when I saw my sister Candide le Cerf, and afterwards my sister Anne Gertrude, I knew not in what words to pour out my heart to God, for this triumph of grace, unless in the words of the Prophet. “*Dicant qui redempti sunt a Domino quos redemit de manu inimice et de regionibus congregavit eos,*” seeing both ourselves, and our sisters so overpowered with mercies ; whether those he had preserved, or those he had brought back ; it seemed as though we were all so melted into one heart and mind, that we could not return separate actions of thanks ; but that God had thus reunited us again, that we might with one heart and mind, sing one full anthem of praise, thanksgiving, blessing, and gratitude, for mercies, every one of which seemed equally to belong to the whole ; since every member alike belongs to the body, of which it is a part, and since to him alone is each, and are all, indebted for every thing they have and are.

We indeed felt so happy, as almost to forget we were yet prisoners, in the pleasure of being reunited. We were however soon reminded of it, for when we descended the brow of our hill, which formerly used to be lined with the peasantry, the tenants in their festival attire, holding their children, and the poor ; all was silent and solitary.

The cheerful sound of bells, and the sight of blazing bonfires in all directions, no longer greeted our eyes and ears, as when the M. Angélique arrived, in days that were past. And as our unattended procession drove up to the great door, two of our faithful grey headed old servants only, came to meet us, with tears in their eyes ; and on looking up, we found all the doors guarded by strangers, the creatures of the archbishop ; and we were told that the last carriage which accompanied us, contained his grand vicar, official, and another ecclesiastic. It was indeed a damp to us, to discover we only exchanged separate prisons in foreign houses, for an imprisonment in our own house ; yet the joy of meeting was so great, that it in truth overpowered every other feeling. Each carriage successively stopped at the door of the great court ; and with one heart and one accord, we spontaneously moved towards the grand portal of the church ; and in one instant that large and ancient Gothic pile was filled by our company, who by the white colour of their dresses, and scarlet crosses, seemed to mark that they too, were amongst the innumerable multitudes, who had washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the lamb, in which their crosses were dyed. We prostrated ourselves with one accord at the feet of that good shepherd, who had thus reassembled his dispersed sheep. He only saw the movement of the hearts of each ; and perhaps in that glad moment, they were all alike. We were thirty six of us, who having been redeemed from our hopeless



captivity, were now returned, and about to rejoin their company, left in this house of Port Royal des Champs. Those who abode faithful in Port Royal de Paris, were expected to arrive on the morrow. That is our whole community, excepting seven out of our whole number of ninety eight :—viz. eighty four choir nuns, and eighteen lay sisters. So that though bereft of our house of Paris, and of one third of our revenue ; we rejoiced that thenceforth, we should altogether form one unleavened bread, without malice, and in sincerity and truth ; and thus be able to present our whole body, one living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to the Lord.

Soon after, the mother prioress with the whole community, who had been expecting us with the impatience which may be imagined, came to open the door, “*la porte des sacraments* ;” which is the door leading from the exterior part of the church, open to the public, in which we then were, into the monastic inclosure. The venerable M. Agnès first rose from the steps, before the rail of the altar, where she was kneeling ; we with one accord fell back, that she might lead the way ; for though great age and fatigue made her steps feeble, yet we followed as sheep follow the steps of the aged shepherd who has long, and tenderly, and faithfully conducted them. The grand vicar and the officers conducted us to the door of inclosure, and never did captives feel so blessed a sense of joy and liberty, as we did, when the well known monastic door of that beloved Zion, where we had spent so many blessed hours, closed behind us

and restored us to all we loved and held sacred. It is in vain to express the mutual joy of both parties, but it may be best imagined by those who know what perfect christian union and friendship is ; and who can picture to themselves what we had suffered for a whole year. Our party just rescued from a horrible solitary captivity, where each had as it were been buried alive ; in which all they loved in the world became as it were dead to them, and they were constantly terrified by cruel threats, and by false news, invented to shake their constancy and to perplex their conscience ; whilst they were destitute, in many instances, of the necessary comforts of life. The other party torn by the loss of thirty-six of their mothers and sisters, and the treachery of some of their own number, without being able to ascertain who, or how many were guilty. Also by the loss of their goods, the domination of strangers, and the endeavour to sow disunion amongst them ; whilst the most terrible threats were constantly resorted to, and every door was guarded, to prevent any communication with friends and advisers without. Those I say, who can realize all these trials, may perhaps form some idea of our thankfulness and joy, at embracing each other ; and recounting our various histories on that blessed, and joyful, and most memorable day, which we were continually interrupting by tears and thanksgivings to God, who had so unexpectedly encompassed us about with songs of deliverance.

I cannot end this letter better, than by expressing the happy hope, that we may be so established in the love of God, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the peace and communion of the Holy Ghost, that we may never be confounded ; but that these blessings may form the solid foundation of that spiritual edifice, which it is the will of God to form in us. That our temple may be built of living stones, tried and proved, and assembled from divers places, in this profound and retired valley, where we arrived just time enough to celebrate the festival of the dedication of our church, the anniversary of which was to be commemorated on the Sunday after our arrival, which took place on Friday.

So that the thirty-six nuns arrived Friday ; the thirteen faithful sisters from the monastery of Paris, who came in next day, and our large community which had remained here, being reunited, we completely filled our whole choir ; and never did we sing with more consolation and spiritual joy, the anthem “ *Hæc est domus domini firmiter ædificata ; bene fundata est supra firmam petram. This is the house of God which is solidly built, which is firmly founded, because it is founded upon the rock.*” Because its only trust is on the sole grace of its Saviour, who said to us by his conduct over us, “ I pity this crowd, &c, because, &c.” which led us to observe, how our Saviour disposed every little circumstance and detail, so as to contribute to the consolation of our faith. *Soli Deo, salvatori nostro, per Jesum Christum, domi-*

num nostrum: gloria, et magnificentia; imperium et potestas; ante omne sæculum; et nunc, et in sæcula sæculorum. AMEN.

Written at Port Royal des Champs, Nov. 28, 1665.

(Signed) Sœur ANGÉLIQUE DE ST. JEAN, (ARNAULD.)

The Sœur Angélique was soon after chosen abbess, and the community flattered themselves with the hope of a peaceful enjoyment of their beloved seclusion. In this hope they were mistaken. The house was immediately surrounded by an armed guard, sentries were placed at every door. They were forbidden from even taking the air in their own gardens. They were deprived of their ministers; interdicted the sacraments; and declared rebels and heretics.

This iniquitous persecution lasted some years. During that time great numbers died, in consequence of the cruelties and insults they underwent. They expired, praying for their persecutors, though they were, even then, denied christian communion, and were after their death, refused the rites of christian sepulture. It was at this juncture that M. Lancelot's letter was written to the M. Angélique de St. Jean. He happened to have an opportunity of sending it by M. de Brienne. During this heavy persecution, the constancy, prudence, and piety of the M. Angélique. were the stay and support of the community.

During this season of trial, many most deeply interesting letters were sent them by their friends.

We select as a sample, this Letter of M. de St.

Marthe, director of Port Royal des Champs, to the abbess of that monastery.

“The cross is at once the christian’s portion and his treasure. By the cross of Christ, divine justice has been satisfied, and the load of man’s debt cancelled; and in the path of the cross, disciples most frequently first meet with their Saviour, and are most generally throughout their pilgrimage called to walk with him. As Christ expired on the cross for sin, so are his disciples, in one sense, called upon to tread in the path which he trod, by each taking up his own individual cross. In so doing for his sake, we shall find the richest reward of grace; viz.—communion with him, and increase in peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, in which the kingdom of God within consists; and which can only be enjoyed in proportion as our carnal affections are crucified.

It is by means of afflictions, spiritually endured, that christians crucify their earthly affections and lusts, that the body of sin is destroyed, and their enemies are conquered. Truly may it be said “in hoc signo vinces.” God who knows all things, best knows the evil of our nature, and the tests the application of which gradually reveals to his children their latent and unsuspected evils, and affords the remedies and discipline they require. In proportion to the inclination of the natural man to evil, the path of the spiritual man must necessarily appear fraught with crosses; because the one is diametrically opposite to the other.

Happy then that child, whom the heavenly father so hedges in, as not to suffer him to escape from beneath his chastening hand. There is no greater mark that God accounts us his children, than that he not only inflicts tribulation, but that he supports us under it, and walks with us through it. What we have to fear is not the cross, but that we should be so unfortunate as not sufficiently to esteem its uses, to want grace to profit by it, and to reap the whole of the rich harvest which the harrow was intended to prepare. Great indeed is the spiritual hardness of that heart, which does not feel thankful to God for treating it as he treated his own son. It is indeed a miserable blindness to complain, when we ought rather to rejoice that we are counted worthy to suffer for his sake. It is grieving the Holy Spirit to receive this great favor with sorrow and ingratitude ; and lastly, nothing more certainly shews our indifference to the cross of Christ himself, than a disposition to reject the peculiar cross he offers to ourselves. He little prizes his master, who refuses conformity with him. The servant contemns his Lord, who spurns his livery.


It is on this ground, that St. Peter, addressing the faithful of the Asiatic churches, tells them, in order to strengthen these newly converted disciples ; not to be shaken, even though for a season they were in heaviness, through manifold temptations, and though the trial of their faith were as by fire ; but rather, that believing in Jesus Christ whom though not having seen they loved ; they may

notwithstanding this trial, rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. St. James also exhorts us not only to rejoice when we are tempted by all sorts of afflictions ; but moreover to make all our joy consist in these trials, which are the means by which the spirit of God shews a believer his corruptions, and enables him to resist them. Count it all joy, he says, when ye fall into divers temptations, knowing this that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. It is in the same spirit that St. Paul declares, that he will alone glory in the cross of his Saviour ; I will glory in nothing but in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Next to which, he appears to rejoice in being permitted to take up his own cross, and follow that crucified Lord. For he only once and by constraint alludes to his abundant revelations ; but he discourses with us, throughout the whole of his epistles, of his bonds, his labors, and his persecutions ; and he seems to esteem himself more favored in having been called to chains and dungeons for the name of Christ, than in having been wrapt into the third heaven.

Amongst all the miseries incident to man, I know of no object more deplorable, or which calls for deeper commiseration, than that of professed disciples of Christ, on whom the cross is indeed laid, but who are ignorant of its value. Persons who smart under its rigor, but who do not feed on its unction ; persons who sink beneath its weight, but

do not enrich themselves with the gold with which it is inlaid ; persons who viewing it with carnal eyes, or beholding it like the Jews with a veil over their eyes, see neither the hand that inflicts it, or the uses it is sent to work out. Persons who in short believe themselves to be christians, but who having in truth never sunk deeply into a sense of the misery and evil of their own heart, have never consequently felt that every step in the path of grace, must necessarily be contrary to that of nature ; and that therefore children of God, so far from wishing to shake off the cross, wish rather to bear it all their lives. When Christ says to them, “ Take my yoke upon you, for I am meek and lowly in heart my yoke is easy and my burden is light,” the heart of the genuine disciple replies with thanksgivings ; for they well know, that by coming to him, they shall find rest to their soul ; which are weary and heavy laden, not with bearing the cross of Christ, but with the overwhelming intolerable burthen of sin.

Lord ! whither shall we go to learn these mysteries, so incomprehensible to worldly wisdom, but to the same cross, the cross of Christ ? That cross where thou sufferedst in the eyes of all men : not only to pay the ransom of all, but to leave us an example, in enduring thy heavy cross, how we should each bear our light one. It is by the cross, heaven is opened to us ; it is by the cross, earth is crucified to us. “ Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”



Jesus Christ would only become our Saviour by the cross, and we can only be his disciples by the same means. Let us then love the occasions he presents us of suffering for him; as he loved the will of his Father, which called him to suffer for us. May we become sensible, that the greatest favor he can bestow upon us, is to invite us to accompany him to Mount Calvary. It is nothing to know Christ merely according to the flesh. How many Jews saw him daily in Jerusalem, and ate and drank with him, and witnessed his miracles, and heard his discourses, who never became more holy; and who knowing all these things with the fullest historic assurance, having been eye witnesses of the facts, yet were left in profound blindness of heart, as to the truths connected therewith and the salvation of their souls. Let us with the beloved disciple, the type of disciples, and his mother, the type of the church; follow him to the cross, where few even of his professing disciples had zeal to follow him, and where the world was scandalized at his weakness and his sufferings. If we have indeed courage to suffer for him, who suffered such unparalleled griefs for us, it will then be time enough to say with St. Ignatius at his martyrdom "Now I recognize the road my master trod. Now I begin to be a disciple." We are only christians in proportion as we are faithful in renouncing the world. We were solemnly engaged to do so at our baptism. But we only in fact execute that engagement, when we endure with joy being treated by the world, as that same evil world treated our

master. The friendship of the world is enmity with God ; and he who has the friendship of the world, has the most serious ground to apprehend that he cannot be in the spirit of him, who though without sin, was yet crucified by that world, of which he is caressed and flattered

We wish to go to heaven ; let us then walk diligently in the road that leads there. It is narrow, it is rugged, it is beset with thorns. It is impossible to enter it without violence to nature ; it is equally impossible to persevere in it, without a perpetual crucifixion of the natural man ; and without resolving by the grace of God, to endure all sorts of afflictions, both from the constant contrariety of the path of grace to that of our own evil nature, and the enmity which from the very same cause, is exercised by the children of this world against all children of God. Let us above all remember in the midst of our severest sufferings, that whilst we seem to be the sport of the will of the wicked ; they are in fact only the instruments, used by measure in the hand of God, to bring upon us that degree of suffering, which he sees it necessary we should endure. He stands by the furnace ; the flames may blaze, but he regulates the temperature ; he says to the fierce flames of persecution, as to the billows of affliction, “ Hitherto shalt thou go, and no further.” Let us then generously submit ourselves with a willing heart to his fatherly correction. It has our true happiness in view, and let us never forget that God has an abundant right to exercise us by the heaviest trials he sees fit ;

since he has called us to an eternal weight of glory, which so infinitely transcends them.

Be then of good courage, be steadfast and immovable. The more rugged the path, the more clearly may we discern the prints of the footsteps of that Saviour, who trod it before us, and the more means have we of bringing to our remembrance, that we are the disciples of that Saviour, who was himself made perfect through sufferings. Nay if trials even appear beyond our strength, let us not be dismayed, since he is then doubly engaged, in weakness to become our strength; and to give us patience to endure, and power to conquer.

O the depths of the wisdom and goodness of God! who hast not merely opened heaven to thy children by the cross, but who hast planted the path of every one of them with such abundant crosses, that they may be continually reminded to look at their crucified Lord and live: and to turn away from that world in which is no trace of it. O what is the deceitfulness of the human heart! The natural vanity even of disciples attaches itself to our present supposed good works, as it did formerly to our sins; to our most holy exercises, as it did to our worldly accomplishments. Vanity is that taint of corruption, that pestilential breath of death, which infects every human thing! Blessed be the path of the cross, which shows us our evils, and makes us distrust that self-complacency, which destroys us.

It is a fatal mistake to believe that we love Christ, if we cannot quit self for him. If a man

hate not father and mother, husband or wife, nay his own life also, and take not up his cross to follow Christ he cannot be his disciple. But what must we do to hate our own life, and to take up our cross, as the gospel commands, and without doing which we cannot be Christ's disciples? Must we flee into eremitic seclusion, must we undertake ascetic austerities? Rather let us submit with heartfelt bowedness to the will of God manifested in his providences; from the inmost soul believing that God knows that which is best for us; and from our inmost spirit cheerfully and gladly submitting to, and bearing, whatever cross is brought upon us. Let us rejoice and be willing to be treated as our enemies treat us. Hatred persuades them that it is just we should suffer every sort of evil. They are delighted when they see us reduced to extreme misery. Let us be of one mind with them, though on a different ground. They believe us to be vile; if we know our own hearts we shall be convinced we are yet viler. If they deprive us of our friends, and separate us from those we love, let us thank them for the needful admonition to quit our earthly holds, to draw nearer and closer to him who has given them to us. If they deprive us of our wealth, and strip us of our earthly possessions, and that our brethren who should assist us, stand by unconcerned; let us willingly be stripped of those things, which are but the garments of the old Adam, and let us more zealously put on Jesus Christ. Of what importance is it that all earthly goods should fail us,

since the loss of all things in submission to the divine will, is the discipline inflicted to make us rich in heavenly treasure. Let us remember, that the poor to whom the kingdom of heaven belongs, are the poor in spirit. Those who, however little they have, are fully conscious that little is yet above their deserts. If then our enemies revile us, let us be fully sensible, as David was in the case of Shimei, that God who sees our hearts, knows we are yet worse. If we are covered with contempt, and treated by our brethren as the offscouring of all things; let us esteem that state, which, whatever be the wickedness of our brethren in reducing us to it, God has yet appointed for us. It is safer to be little than great in the eyes of men. If they put us in the lowest place, let us gladly accept it, and stay where it pleases God we should be, till he himself sees fit to take us out of it. Why should that seem so difficult to us, when we recollect that all men can do to effect our ruin can only, if we keep under the divine hand, tend to work out our salvation; “For all things shall work together for good to those who love God. Many are those, who like the brethren of Joseph, strip their brother because he is more righteous than they, and send him an exile in a foreign land, and steel their hearts against pity, though he be in destitution, and though he has been amongst them, and with the same comforts as themselves. But the end, if we are faithful, will be that we too may say to them with Joseph, “*Vos cogitastis me malum, sed Deus vertit illud in bonum.*” You had the inten-

tion to do me evil, but God has changed that evil into good. Nay, we may use this language much more truly than Joseph, for the good he had to rejoice in was a short lived temporal good, under an earthly monarch, and in a transient earthly kingdom; whereas the suffering disciples of Christ are the elect of the king eternal, immortal, and invisible; that which they receive is an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled; and their kingdom is that blessed land of heavenly promise, the kingdom of heaven, of which the new Jerusalem is the capital, and the lamb of God the light thereof.

Do not, my dear Sister, look back with vain and a too carnal regret at the past; nor let your mind dwell with painful retrospect, on those hours, when your celebrity appeared at its height; when your house walked with God, and when the wise, the great, and the wealthy of this world, with one accord sat at your feet. When the ear heard you, then it blessed you; when the eye saw you, it gave witness to you. Remember that Job, was no less the servant of the Most High, when his possessions were wrested from him, his family dispersed, and his friends traitors, than when surrounded by all this world can bestow. Nay his adversity rather designates him as the child of God, than his prosperity. Hitherto we have been as babes in Christ, fed with milk; now that it behoves us to grow up as fathers and mothers in Israel, our Heavenly Father, whose love conducts us from strength to strength, until we shall each appear

before him in Zion, feeds us with strong meat. It would be vain indeed to inflict crosses upon ourselves, in the pride of our own hearts, supposing we are fit to endure them; but it is a spurious humility, to doubt that we can bear any thing, under his all powerful and sustaining hand. It is humility to distrust ourselves. It is faithlessness to doubt God. Let us then receive it as a token for good, that he has weaned us from the milk, to nourish our growth with strong meat. It is true this bread is very hard and very bitter; but it is enough, that it is the bread God has appointed for us, and if we humbly accept it from his hand, not looking back to the flesh-pots of Egypt, we shall abundantly grow in grace and benediction, He that has most may find no grace over and above that he needs; but he that has least, shall find that he has also fully sufficient. And if we do but seek his daily blessing on our daily celestial bread of his providing; we shall in its strength, be enabled to journey the whole forty days; that is, during the whole time of our life, the season of our exile, till we arrive at the mount of God, our eternal inheritance.

Be not cast down, if through the length of the way, and the fierce heat of persecution, your soul should at times seem as a parched land without water. If we can but suffer this deprivation, in a spirit of self abasement, we need not fear. Let us remember, that, spiritually as well as temporally, the son of man grows as a root out of a dry ground. If we do but submit to the workings of

the divine hand, the land will not less be a land of God. He will cultivate it himself, will water it with a celestial, though perhaps an almost imperceptible dew; he will carefully remove the stones, and eradicate the thorns. He will render it fruitful through humiliations. He will with his own right hand plant there the true vine; and he will purge it, to make it bear fruit more abundantly, by pruning off every useless branch, and raising it from the dust of the earth, to train it upon the espalier of the cross. What would become of the most promising vine, were it not cultivated, fed, pruned, and trained upwards. What would become of the most eminent saint, if the same God, whose gratuitous mercy planted the seed of his word in his heart, did not continually prune the too luxuriant natural branches, and train it to rest on the support of the root of Christ.

The laborer can hope to reap a harvest, only of the same nature as the seed he has sown. Pleasures, human consolations, indulgences of sense, the satisfaction of our own wills, are the seeds of all those miseries, which attain the full expansion of their deadly fruits in hell. But on the contrary, whilst the indulgence of an evil nature yields these unhappy fruits, a spiritual submission for Christ's sake, to crosses, to humiliations, self denial and contradictions are those seeds which bear their full and blessed fruits of holiness and happiness in the world to come. We shall be truly rich in eternity, if for Christ's

sake we have suffered the crucifixion of that evil nature, which is enmity to him in this world. If we have been willing to drink of the bitter cup, and to be baptised with the baptism he is baptised with, we shall also sit at his marriage supper, and be invited to behold his glory. Nothing can be more obvious than these two truths, and nothing more universally acknowledged. Yet such is the inconsistency of man, that the wicked, whilst they confess it, never withhold from sowing their full measure of that seed, which must necessarily produce to them so much misery; and the children of Christ with equal folly, whilst acknowledging the same truth, seem equally astonished as though some strange thing had befallen them, when God subjects them to that discipline and pruning, which they allow is the means of a more blessed entrance into an eternal weight of glory.

Let us blush at our own contradictions. We wish to be godly. We acknowledge the natural mind is enmity against God; and yet we are astonished when the path of godliness involves a sacrifice to nature. We know that the world lieth in wickedness, that the world crucified Christ; yet we are in the last astonishment, and think it very strange, when the world does not admire and honor the followers of the master they persecuted to death. My dear sisters, let us not deceive ourselves. Let us learn practically, what we have long acknowledged theoretically; and we shall be quite sure that the truth which the world does not crucify, is not that truth which

will ever save us. The godliness which does not scandalize the ungodly world, and which suffers nothing from the wicked, is not that which Jesus Christ laid down his life to exhibit to the world. On the contrary, we have reason to fear that the virtue the world admires, is a mere external human virtue; and that the esteem and peace which accompany it, will be all its recompence. O Lord, the world is indeed at enmity with thee. Happy indeed are those redeemed spirits of the just made perfect, who standing before thy throne and entered into thy rest, enjoy thy presence in heaven, amidst a blessed community of all the myriads of heavenly hierarchies: who with one tongue, and heart, and spirit, bless, and laud, and magnify thy holy name, and enjoy the plenitude of all thy benedictions: but happy too, are those, O Lord! who, plucked by thy mercy, as brands from the burning, enjoy communion with thee, in the only way in which it can be enjoyed in this lower world; like a flame burning amidst thorns; like a treasure unconsumed but molten in the fierce flames of a surrounding furnace; like a traveller, who finds indeed bread and water to support his life, but who traverses an inhospitable desert where he has to fight every step of his way, in the midst of an enemy's land.

Shall we, O Lord, dare to say that we suffer too much, that thou art a cruel and merciless physician, because thou probest our wounds, to apply an efficacious remedy? Shall we term thee a cruel father, because thou chastenest us after the

manner of children, to render us fit for the eternal inheritance to which thy bounty has called us? Teach us, O Lord, to renounce all the reluctance of nature. Compel me to adopt from necessity, that salutary discipline, which the dimness of my spiritual light did not sufficiently enable me to discern as my path; and which the feebleness of nature rendered me averse to embrace. Assist the short views of sense and of human reason, by the wholesome and beneficent compulsion of thy providence; snatch us with a strong hand, from our natural love of ease and supineness. O thou good physician of our mortally diseased souls, inflict upon us without being withheld by nature's agony, all the discipline and operations necessary to our cure. Place us under that regimen, which will best render us strong and robust to follow thee in the path of the cross, to taste the sweet unction, and feed on the hidden manna, imparted to those who suffer for thy sake; and who, feeding on that celestial food, are enabled in the midst of trials and persecutions, to keep the word of thy patience, and to rejoice and give thanks with exceeding joy and gladness.

We, my dear sisters, love Christ because he first loved us. But we know he loved us, because he laid down his life for us; let us then shew the truth of our love to him, by laying down our will and inclination for him; and like Abraham, making our faith manifest, by that which is the test of faith, action. How very little is our spiritual light, whilst we complain of the injustice of man-

kind. Let us rather be assured that no human being can have any power over us, but what is appointed to him by God. A man may, according to his intention, reap to himself a blessing or a curse ; but to those who suffer, if it be according to the will of God, there can be but one issue. Have we not been told, that every man's work shall be tried as by fire ? Why then should we be astonished, when we are cast into the furnace ? Let us rather be of good cheer, knowing that it is only where valuable metal is to be extracted, that the ore undergoes the crucible. Let us then view our persecutors no longer as enemies ; but as the furnace men, charged to heap on the coal and feed the flame ; whilst the master who presides, regulates the heat and duration of the refining process. How can we like Job submit to the hand of God, whilst we hold in abhorrence the chastening instruments he employs ? Do we submit to the surgeon who pronounces amputation necessary to save life, and yet strike and revile his operator ? Never let us forget that it is in truth, a secret rebellion against God if we hate persons, simply for being the instruments of inflicting upon us that which God sees it is necessary we should endure. Let us then only pray, that the son of God may himself walk with us through the fiery furnace ; and that he will be pleased not to slacken his hand, till the flames have through his blessing, thoroughly wrought their work, and consumed the dross and the tin.

Can we, O Lord, as thy disciples, desire a

path unlike to thine. Thou leftest the glory and adoration of angels of heaven, to sojourn amidst the corruption of earth, and the contumely and contradiction of sinners. Thy birth was amongst brute beasts, thy childhood passed in subjection and poverty. In thy manhood thou wert a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Thy enemies reviled thee, the rulers conspired against thee, the professedly religious cast thee out, thy friends forsook thee, thou enteredst life amidst the beasts of the earth, thou departedst from it, nailed upon the cross. God, thy heavenly father, apparently to man, abandoned thee ; the synagogue, thy mother, crowned thee with lacerating thorns ; the world, whom thou diedst to save, placed a reed as a sceptre of mockery and derision in thy hand ! If such was the treatment of the sinless master, what can be expected by the sinful servants ? O Lord, such as thou art, make thou me ! Beholding thee, may I be transformed in thy image, and may I one day wake up in thy perfect likeness : in the mean time, strengthen me even on this earth, in my measure, to walk in thy path ! Never let me forget, that I am the soldier of a captain, made perfect through suffering ! The member of a mystic body, whose head was crowned with thorns, and expired on the cross. Let me, like St. Paul, only glory in the cross of Christ, and in Him crucified. O how poor and ignoble is all the vain pomp and glory of this world, compared to the privilege of being allowed, like St. John, to draw near to our suffering Lord on Cal-

vary, or to converse on those sufferings with our crucified Lord on Tabor.

But why have I written you this long epistle on sufferings? Why have I given so much time, to that which ceases with time? Earthly sufferings, like earthly joys, are to a christian but of time and for time. They equally pass away for ever, on its rapidly passing stream. Whilst I have written, and whilst you have read, how many moments of suffering have hastened by, and been engulfed in the ocean of things passed, and never to return! But the bliss, the mercies, the glories of your eternal inheritance, every moment hasten nearer; and their ineffable fruition is eternal! If joys are transient to the world, sorrows are as transient to the christian. Let the children of light then blush to give that time and anxiety to sorrows which they shall so soon for ever leave; and not waste their precious time and thoughts on transient things, which they condemn in the children of the world, when given to pleasure. The root of the evil is the same in both; since in either instance, the thoughts, the interest, and the mind, are given to what is merely temporal and transitory; but our privilege is, to have our conversation in Heaven, our heart and treasure fixed on what is eternal! Never let us live below it!

My dear Sisters, with great consideration,

Yours, in our common Lord,

ST. MARTHE.

The recluses, meanwhile, were exposed to sufferings little less severe than the nuns. Hand-bills

were posted in the corners of every street, offering rewards to those who should apprehend them. Many of the clergy did not hesitate to express their hopes of bringing them to the Bastille, or the stake.

They wandered from one hiding-place to another, with their lives in their hands. Not unfrequently the police-officers searched the very rooms in which they lay concealed. At length M. Singlin died from the extremity of suffering, M. de Saci and M. Fontaine were seized, and put in the Bastille. Their arrest was accompanied with many circumstances of unnecessary cruelty. During their stay in the Bastille, they were continually threatened with poison. How often may the just retribution of God be traced even in this life ! The officer, who thus exceeded his commission, in unmercifully persecuting the servants of his Lord, himself died a death of torture, two months after, by the hand of his own child. This officer was M. Aubray, father to the famous, or rather infamous, poisoner, the Marchioness de Brinvilliers.

CHAP. XI.

Pacification of Clement IX.—Port Royal Des Champs.—Its wide celebrity.—Sœur Flavie Passart.—Dorothee Perdreau.—Madame Montgober's relation.

THIS persecution of the Port Royalists continued for some years.

Meanwhile, that part of their friends whom I have described as only occasionally retiring to Port Royal, escaped the extremity of the tempest. They were indeed remarked as Jansenists in the public eye, but their high rank exempted them from violence; and their eminent virtue and integrity in discharging the most important trusts, compelled universal respect and esteem. M. de Pomponne, son to M. de Andilli, and brother to the abbess of Port Royal,^a was minister of state. M. H. Arnauld was bishop of Angers; the Duke of Liancourt was Governor of Normandy. Whole provinces were reaping the fruits of the munificence of the Duke and Duchess of Longueville, and the

^a The M. Angélique de St. Jean.

Prince and Princess of Conti. However bigoted men might be, they were too clear sighted to employ persecution against those with whose exaltation their own interests were so immediately interwoven. Hence these, and many other personages of equal merit, still possessed considerable influence.

These excellent persons still entertained the most warm affection and the most profound veneration for the saints, whose piety had been instrumental in their conversion. They only waited a favorable opportunity to shew the firmness of their attachment by effectually serving them.

As soon as the first fury of the storm had a little spent itself, they consulted together. They resolved to unite their strength, and to exert the whole weight of their influence to serve their friends. Madame de Longueville took upon herself to be the ostensible head of this party. All deliberations were carried on at the hôtel Longueville. Under her protection, the archbishop of Sens, the bishop of Châlons, with Arnauld and Nicole, drew up a plan of pacification. They proposed, that on their part, the signature of the formulary should be conceded, on condition that on the Pope's an explanation should be accepted. This explanation contained a full submission in matters of faith, and promised, as before, a respectful silence in matters of fact.

The duchess of Longueville wrote herself to the Pope on the subject. Clement IX. had then just entered on his pontificate. He was a man of a

pacific disposition, and had long deplored the divisions of the church. He immediately issued a brief of reconciliation. This act was termed the pacification of Clement IX. It took place in 1668.

The prison doors were immediately opened. M. Arnauld was introduced at court. The recluses returned in peace to Port Royal. The nuns were released from their long confinement. The confessors and directors were restored. Universal felicitations were made to the Jansenists. Even the Gallican clergy and the archbishop of Paris, who had declared them rebels and heretics, joined in congratulations. They found no difficulty, at the king's request, in proclaiming their perfect orthodoxy and sanctity. The joy of the common people was unbounded; for they had always considered the Jansenists as saints. But above all, the joy of the venerable directors was great, when they found that their flock, though so long scattered, had individually deepened in piety. They were as the three children coming out of the furnace, not only with their clothes unsinged, but loosed from the bonds with which they entered.

The period which immediately succeeded this persecution, was the brightest in the annals of Port Royal. The fame of this seclusion was extensively spread. Its reputation both for learning and sanctity, was firmly established. The number of nuns and of recluses became augmented in a degree far exceeding that of any former period. Amongst several of the new recluses were persons

of very large fortune. Considerable sums were expended in enlarging the monastery and gardens. The duke of Luynes and M. de Bagnols had each appropriated immense sums to add to the abbey. The former of these gentlemen alone built an additional dormitory, containing seventy-two cells. The duke of Liancourt also, and Madame de Longueville, built several new apartments. Port Royal des Champs became one of the most spacious abbeys in all France. It contained nearly two hundred nuns, besides a very considerable number of ladies, who had apartments in the monastery, and whose piety induced them to wish to board there without assuming the monastic habit. The recluses also had very considerably increased their numbers, and the celebrity of Port Royal had trebly multiplied the number of those friends who wished to be under their direction. Families of rank, affluence, and piety, who did not wish to quit their avocations in the world, built themselves country houses in the valley of Port Royal, in order to enjoy the society of its pious and learned inhabitants. Amongst this class were the duchess of Longueville, the duke and duchess of Luynes, and of Liancourt.

The Port Royalists might now be divided into three general classes. The nuns, who occupied the monastery, and followed the rule of Citeaux. The recluses, who led a retired life, free from all luxury or unnecessary intercourse with men, and who each served the whole community by following some occupation either manual or intellectual.

These were bound by no vows. They, at this period, consisted of two companies. The men who lived at the farm-house belonging to Port Royal and other small cottages, and the ladies above mentioned, who boarded in apartments in the monastery. The third class was composed of the innumerable multitude of friends under their direction. Some of them had country houses near Port Royal, and others only occasionally retired to board there.

The institution now began to be a very considerable one. It had been long important in the eyes of the world, from the literary celebrity and acknowledged piety of its persecuted inhabitants. It now began to be so from the magnitude of its numbers, and from the immense wealth and exalted rank of a large proportion of its members. For eleven years it continued to flourish. Its prosperity and usefulness seemed to increase day by day. On every side it appeared blessing and blessed. The same God who had given them grace sufficient to their day in adversity now bestowed on them that double portion which is needful to stand in prosperity. Though so many rich, so many noble, so many learned were called, still Port Royal stood a bright example of unfeigned humility and self-abasement, of self-denial, charity, daily taking up the cross, and following a crucified Lord.

In the winter of 1670, death deprived the monastery of Port Royal des Champs of very many of its members. Amongst those who departed


this life, were the Sœurs St. Ann of St. Bernard of St. Barthlemi Fortier; who, always uniform in her conduct, and faithful to her duties, had spent nearly forty years in the cloister; likewise the two excellent Sœurs M. St. Luce Garnier, and Magdeleine de St. Opportune Roustel; the latter of whom received on her death-bed the habit of novice, which was given her in consideration of her zeal and piety. On the second of May, they also lost another lay sister, called Marie Magdeleine de Charron, on whom God shewed forth his mercy in a very particular manner. She was the last nun who quitted the house of Paris, to unite herself to her sisters of Port Royal des Champs. “She thought herself already in paradise,” said the M. Angélique de St. Jean, “when she saw herself restored to the M. Agnès, and the community. All her sentiments were one continual succession of joy, praise, and thanksgiving, for her restoration. She lived in peace, and died in humble faith.”

God who has pity on whom he will, and who leaves to their natural hardness of heart whom he sees fit; cited at the same time before his tribunal, the Sœur Flavie Passart, so famous for her intrigues and her treachery.

As soon as the M. Agnès heard that she was dangerously ill, she was deeply touched with the state of this wretched person; she seemed as though her heart had forgotten all the years of her duplicity, treachery, and enmity: and that it only retained a recollection of her, as when, abandoned and

destitute, she in her childhood, cast herself on the charity of the Mère Angèlique. Having heard that she was in imminent danger, and that she was friendless in the midst of the community she had taken such pains to disunite from Port Royal, the M. Agnès sat down and wrote to this most unworthy daughter, a heart affecting letter. It was expressed with the affection of a spiritual mother ; but also with the faithfulness of one who feels the value of the immortal soul, and who bears in mind, that the person receiving it, may soon be called into the presence of God.

The following circumstances gave occasion to this letter :—M. Desseaux, a man of deep piety, who had lived for forty years a retired life at Champ Garnier, a farm belonging to Port Royal ; and who had a sister who was a nun there, was nephew to S. Flavie. Having heard that his aunt was very ill, he went over to Paris, to enquire after her. He was informed that she was at the last extremity. He then charged the nun at the turn, who was his cousin, to go to the Sœur Flavie, and to tell her, he was come to enquire after her health, both on his account and on that of the nuns of Port Royal, who were always anxious concerning her welfare. The nun having executed her commission, returned, and brought word from the sick nun, that she deeply felt his kindness in taking the trouble of coming ; and earnestly recommended herself to his prayers, and no less to those of the nuns of Port Royal des Champs. M. Desseaux was ready mounted on his horse to return,



when he was again summoned by one of the nuns of the turn, and told there was yet a word more she wished to say. Being again seated in the parlor, the same nun, his cousin, who had before spoken to him, after having carefully shut the door, asked him^b if he was quite alone? M. Desseaux having answered that he was; she caused another nun to draw near, and then told him, she was expressly charged by the Sœur Flavie to express to him the most lively gratitude for the charity of the nuns of Port Royal; and that not only for their present enquiries, but especially for all the numberless obligations for which she was indebted to them; and that she charged the nun, above all, to say, that being now in the immediate prospect of eternity, she threw herself in spirit at their feet, and most unfeignedly besought their forgiveness, and earnestly entreated them to forget the past. But these nuns at the same time, represented the duration under which they found themselves enthralled, and required M. Desseaux to give them his assurance of the most inviolable secrecy. M. Desseaux accordingly returned to Port Royal des Champs, and executed his commission. That community, deeply affected by the state of their former sister, and by the message she had sent, considered how they might devise some means of making known to her, that they accepted her message in good part, and heartily forgave her, hoping God would do the same. On this account, the M.

^b It must be remembered, that the monastic grate divided them, and that the curtains were probably drawn.

Agnès, wrote the above mentioned letter; the nuns thinking nothing could prove more consolatory to her, on account of the strict intimacy which had formerly subsisted between them. The epistle was written in great haste, because M. Desseaux had reported the physician to have pronounced, that in all probability, the Sœur Flavie had not twenty-four hours to live. The Mère Agnès, wishing both to comfort the Sœur Flavie, and also to maintain the strictest secrecy as to what had passed, that she might neither betray the intermediate nuns, nor expose the dying penitent to ill-treatment, purposely avoided any reference to the message she had received; and contented herself with only expressing the strong and continued affection of the nuns of Port Royal; and assuring her of their entire forgetfulness of the past, but beseeching her, if anything pressed upon her own conscience, to look to God through the merits of Christ, who was abundant in mercy, and whose precious blood would wash away all sin. No more was heard on the subject for a whole month, at the expiration of which time, a long letter was delivered to the M. Agnès bearing the signature of Sœur Flavie; but neither expressed in her style, which was peculiar, nor yet written in her hand. This epistle after many common place observations, termed the nuns of Port Royal, disobedient, rebellious, &c. and added, that her greatest consolation was the recollection of her own conduct at Port Royal. The letter was a long one; but whilst the nuns of Port Royal des Champs were occupied


in imagining whence it originated, they received intelligence of the death of the Sœur Flavie ; which must have taken place in less than a week after the date of the letter. The mystery of this epistle was never unravelled. Whether she in truth repented or not, must be left to the searcher of hearts. Whether as a sincere penitent, she found acceptance with God, who can snatch a brand even from the burning ; and only experienced the temporal wretchedness, of finding herself on her death-bed, separated from all her faithful spiritual friends ; and surrounded by persons, only occupied in betraying her soul, in stifling the voice of her bitter remorse, and in denying her every means of spiritual fellowship ; or whether God saw it fit to leave her, to shoot the irrevocable gulf steeped in the spirit of spiritual slumber and sleep ; leaving her an awful warning instead of a monument of saving grace, it is not for us to decide. No one had pity on her soul, but the nuns of Port Royal, whom she had so basely betrayed ; they made for her the usual prayers which they continued for thirty days. The archbishop of Paris, strictly forbade that any particulars of her death should be enquired into on the one hand, or mentioned on the other.

Though it did not occur till very many years after, this seems a suitable occasion to introduce the account of the close of her tool and companion in error. It was however not until the beginning of the year 1685, that God cited to his tribunal the Sœur Dorothée Perdreau. She had main-

tained, for many years, her usurped seat of abbess of Port Royal de Paris; at least a possession undisturbed by men, but unblessed by God. The remorse, which first occasionally seemed to rouse her from her deep lethargy, gradually became more acute and harrowing; it gave her perpetual pain, and left its deep traces on her harassed, anxious, and troubled countenance. Truly there is no peace to the wicked. At length, unable to bear her torment, she earnestly, and at all hazards, besought permission to see and speak, and pour out her heart, to some of her former friends; but she never could obtain it. The false counsellors who had urged her to the steps she had taken, would never permit her to retrace them. In vain did they try to calm her acute anguish. Often did she exclaim, in the bitterness of her heart, “I have once been at Port Royal, and once drank of its spirit! I know, better than yon can, the scandal and infamy of my usurping from ambition, the charge which so holy a nun as the Mère Angélique Arnauld renounced from humility!” Nor was this her only grief: sorrow, distress, harassment, and vexation, tormented her on all sides. On the one hand, the Sœur Flavie, a person far her superior in talent and intrigue, and who had begun her schemes, solely with a view to be abbess herself, was her most unrelenting enemy. In public she treated her with the most cutting contempt and ridicule: secretly, she formed never-ending intrigues and cabals against her, and in every respect sought to thwart and

contradict her. In vain did the Sœur Dorothée, in sincere repentance, and impossibility of retracing her steps, frequently earnestly desire to do the best she could to establish the ancient discipline of Port Royal, in her own usurped monastery. The five or six nuns of Port Royal, who had been persuaded to join her by the sophistry of false teachers, no longer paid her the obedience they had formerly yielded to their superiors at Port Royal. The Sœur Dorothée soon found, what will ever be experienced by unfaithful spiritual guides, that it is much more easy to maintain a perfectly strict religious discipline, than to enforce a relaxed one. Because a sacrifice of natural will must take place in either case ; and the human heart will far sooner make that sacrifice when what is required is truly according to the full dictate of conscience, and to the advice of a person we know to be faithful, than when the sacrifice falls short of that which is truly the will of God, and is proposed, for form sake, by a person we know to be unfaithful. It is easier to make a complete sacrifice, that will fully satisfy conscience, than a half sacrifice which falls short of it. Hence in every church, and every religious institution, any relaxation is but the prelude to a complete and entire fall. Hence, finding it impossible to govern those who knew her to be unfaithful, she was compelled to yield one point after another, in the hopes of bribing them even to preserve a poor outward shew of respect. Her spiritual directors added still more

to her affliction. They ruled her with a rod of iron ; and continually stopped her mouth with the most haughty insolence, whenever she deplored to them, which she often did with bitter tears, the relaxation of her house. The fact was, that the evil counsellors who had separated Port Royal de Paris, from Port Royal des Champs, felt their honor interested in the flourishing state of the former. But as only the two Sœurs Dorothée and Flavie, and six more out of the whole number of one hundred and eighty Port Royal nuns, were the fruit of their sophistry and cajolery, and of the threats and incarceration of years ; and as no person of any piety would join their iniquitous institution, they found themselves in a most awkward situation. The total incapacity of the Sœur Dorothée, and the indulgences they were obliged to connive at to maintain their usurpations, together with festivals they gave to propitiate the public, had occasioned the most entire disorganization of their temporal affairs : so that although they had wrested from Port Royal des Champs, the magnificent house and establishment of Port Royal de Paris, and though they had iniquitously deprived the hundred and eighteen inhabitants of Port Royal des Champs, of nearly two thirds of its revenues for the house at Paris, which contained eight lapsed Port Royal nuns ; yet they saw themselves on the eve of a scandalous bankruptcy. Their poverty and distress, as well as their relaxed discipline and extravagance, were talked of at every *petit souper* of Paris ; and they saw this



institution which it had been the object, so many years, of so much sophistry, fraud, and oppression, to accomplish, converted into a mere engine of holding them up to the contempt and derision of all catholic christendom. In order then to do away this imputation, these evil directors had it at heart, above all things, to increase the number of the nuns ; but as no religious persons would join them, these directors obliged the abbess to relax the rules in every point, in order to open the door to the multitudes, whom want of fortune to establish themselves in the world, reduced to wish for an asylum ; but whom want of piety and vocation, excluded from Port Royal des Champs. Yet even this means did not succeed ; the ten or twelve who came, were sufficient effectually to render hopeless any attempt at reformation ; whilst they were far too few to give the monastery reputation in the eyes of the world ; all of which bad success embittered the spiritual directors still more against the unfortunate abbess, who had been their tool. On her they now threw all the blame, instead of taking it to themselves, to whom it was chiefly due. They had indeed raised her to the abbacy, almost solely on account of her incapacity, hoping to find in her an easy tool ; but they now discovered that very incapacity wholly precluded the strenuous exertion which might possibly have retrieved affairs. The Sœur Dorothee, meanwhile very different from the ambitious Flavie Passart, truly deplored the state of the house, and mourned over its lamentable fall, and its wide difference,

from what it was before the separation. She reproached her directors continually, with having imposed on her the burthen of governing others ; and declared again and again, with tears, that she never would have acceded but from the fear lest the house should be dissolved and lost. She added, with the most piercing expressions of sorrow, “ that they must be alone responsible for all the evil.” That they well knew it was solely their threats, and her timidity, and want of intrepidity, to bear like her mothers and sisters the privations of sacraments, and fulminations of excommunications, which had alone prevented her from following those she ever venerated ; and whose seat they had forced her, against her will, and against her conscience, to usurp. And two or three of the nuns of the ancient stamp, having joined with her, and having bitterly bewailed the relaxed state of the monastery to a priest, who sometimes officiated there, and who was the only spiritual preacher they had ; the young relaxed ones complained to the director, and had him silenced. Those who had placed her in office, were ever upbraiding her with having accepted it, and with her incapacity, which she was also continually reminded of, in the most disrespectful terms, by her nuns. Such was the state of this unhappy abbess. Every thing showed her deep distress of mind. Having at one time heard of a pious Benedictine, she wrote to him, begging him to come, for the urgent spiritual relief of one of her nuns. He instantly went there, at seven in

the morning, when the abbess herself came, and in tears, and in the greatest distress, spoke of her own wretched situation, of the relaxation of her monastery, of the great pain and remorse she felt at having been terrified into compliance, by bad advisers. She spoke till twelve o'clock at noon, and in the greatest anguish and agitation. In vain did she fast, pray, &c. &c. the relaxation of her monastery, her own usurpation, the unjust wresting of the house of Port Royal, and its revenues, lay heavy on her heart. Well did she feel, it could not have the blessing of God. The Benedictine expressed his satisfaction at her deep compunction; "truly," he said, "these at least are precious remains." "Ah," said the miserable abbess, "our best moments are but an empty shadow of what we learnt once at Port Royal! there, there, at that blessed house, which we fools have miserably betrayed, there indeed, you will see the substance itself!" Very soon after, the news arrived that the Mère Dorothée Perdreau had departed this life, on the 4th of January, 1685. But the particulars of her death were carefully hushed up.

Soon after however, a most extraordinary story was covertly circulated. So marvellous as to refute belief; and yet so awful, and so characteristic, that many thought, it at least shewed, that God can punish by the operations of an evil conscience, and a troubled imagination, without the intervention of any external circumstances. The story was again hushed up; yet a sort of mystery was preserved, which prevented it from being utterly

disbelieved. But the circumstance itself, was a few weeks after, authenticated from Port Royal de Paris itself. M. de Mongobert, widow of the Marquis of Mongobert, of the house of Joyeuse, having one day paid a visit to M. de la Grange, a nun at Port Royal de Paris; she asked her whether the story current of the death of the abbess Dorothee Perdreau, was true. M. de la Grange said, “I cannot take upon me to say what particulars may have been related to you; but nothing is more certainly true, than the mysterious circumstances with which it was accompanied. We can trust you, and every particular we are about to tell you, you may assuredly rely upon.” She then called another nun, and said to her. “My sister, draw near; we may open our minds to this lady, and speak to her in full confidence. Do let us unburden our hearts, and confide to her what has passed.” The nuns then related, the dreadful remorse and perturbation of mind experienced by the Sœur Dorothee; and not by her only, but by some of the unfaithful nuns of Port Royal, her companions in guilt. They macerated their flesh, performed long and rigorous fasts, the most austere penances, and long watches, but in vain; it seemed as if they found no peace. One evening before the 29th of December, all the other nuns being retired to bed, it was the turn of two of the former Port Royal nuns, to perform the nightly watch at the perpetual adoration of the holy sacrament. The nuns they relieved were retired, and they knelt down alone in the

church. That church, whose walls had heard their early vows ; in which the Mère Angélique, who had received them to profession, the Mère des Anges, and so many of the worthies of Port Royal, whose memories they had disgraced, were buried. A solitary lamp steadfastly, but dimly, burnt over the altar ; and they knelt with awe, and yet seeking to fix their heart in deep penitence, on him whose sacrifice is perpetuated on the altar. The dampness of the church struck a chill over them. The night was dark and gusty. Yet as they thought on him, whose precious blood was spilled for all sin, they felt a sad comfort and deep abasement. The night was long and dark ; they were at an advanced age ; they had fasted long and severely ; the watch was to be prolonged through all the long hours of the night. They prayed, till mental prayer succeeded to vocal ; and at length, distinct thought seemed, as it were, absorbed in silence before the awful presence of God. When suddenly, they saw, as it were, a shadow rise from the tomb of the Mère Angélique, which was just without the grate, separating the nuns' choir, from the nave of the church ; and as they looked, they saw the shade assume her semblance. It bore her countenance, but the icy gravity of death, and of stern reproof, sat upon it. In her shadowy hand, was the abbess's crosier. And it passed on with a majestic port, beyond that of living mortals, drawing near from the dark recesses in the opposite depths of the church. The grate stopped it not. It entered their choir, drawing near with a

grave and solemn step. The two nuns were transfixed with awe, and horrible fear. Their flesh crept, as the spectre approached; till it stopped (having passed the whole length of the choir) and seemed to sit down in the abbess's seat; that is, the first place, at the bottom of the choir, on the right side. The apparition being seated, and elevating the crosier; they thought they saw, by an opposite door, a second shadowy form, resembling the Sœur Dorothée, enter; on whom the apparition fixed its glazed eyes, and sternly said "Sœur Dorothée! Sœur Dorothée! I hereby summon you! Appear before the tribunal of God, and give up your account!" The accent was awful and heart chilling; and as the spectre fixed its eyes, it seemed as though the Sœur Dorothée was irresistibly drawn near by a deadly fascination; till being about to prostrate herself, at the footstool of the spectre abbess, the whole vanished.

And the spell being as it were broken, the nuns, with one accord, rushed out of the church, and ran to the abbess Dorothée, to whom they told the whole: who being seized with the most violent terror, exclaimed, "O my God! my God! I shall die immediately," which she accordingly did, a few days after."

"The singularity of this relation seems to demand a more particular reference, see *Lettre de Du Fossé* at the end of *Du Fossé's Memoires* pp. 515.—517. Also *Dom Clemencet*, Tom. 8. pp. 99. Also *Gilbert's Memoires*, Tom 3. pp. 6.—8. Also *Lettres Edifiantes*. Likewise see the death of l'Abbesse intruse *Dorothee Perdreau*, in the general histories of Port Royal. *Clemencet, Gilbert, &c. &c.*

Such was the relation of Madame la Grange, to Madame de Montgobert. Whatever might be their opinion of this singular narration ; at the present day, it will probably receive but one interpretation. It is indeed an awful memento, that a righteous God needs no extraordinary outward chastisements to punish the guilty : the terrors of an evil conscience, and troubled imagination, may prove as efficient instruments of punishment in his retributive justice as the most severe temporal scourge.

CHAP. XII.

Death of Madame De Longueville.—Violent Persecution.—Recluses Exiled.—M. De Saci.—M. Angèlique De St. Jean.—Beautiful Letters of M. St. Marthe, and L'Abbè Boileau.

For the short space of eleven years, the community of Port Royal des Champs shone forth, a brilliant example of almost every gift of nature and of grace.

At the end of this period, Madame de Longueville died. Her death took place in 1679. It then clearly appeared what had been the real motive for suspending the persecution. The king's respect for so near a relative was the true cause of the Jansenists being so long unmolested during the life of that princess. She had scarcely been deceased one month, before the Jesuits openly renewed their hostilities.

That storm now burst upon them which finally overwhelmed Port Royal. All the recluses received an order from government finally and immediately to quit Port Royal. Most of them

died in poverty and exile, but rich in faith and good works. A lingering, but cruel persecution, was instituted against the nuns, who were now deprived of their protectors. They were first interdicted from receiving either scholars or novices. This alone would have insured the termination of the establishment. But their enemies were not content with waiting what might be called its natural death. They found means to wrest from them the house of Port Royal de Paris and half their revenues. Although thus unjustly deprived of their property, their charity did not fail. They had formerly maintained four medical men on purpose to attend the poor. Their funds were now inadequate to this expense. They learned to dress their wounds themselves. As they had formerly poured forth charities out of their abundance, they now denied themselves, to continue them in their poverty. They have frequently, with a cheerful countenance, made a liberal donation, when, at the same time, they had not wherewith to purchase food for the next meal.

Meanwhile, as temporal sorrows pursued, and temporal losses assailed them on every side, so their faith was not suffered to fail. Their spiritual riches seemed still to increase, and the daily trimmed lamps of these truly wise virgins shone the brighter, and gave forth a light more pure, as the quickly closing night of adversity blackened around them. Very many of the recluses and spiritual guides, who though removed to distant

exiles, still carried on an occasional intercourse by letter with Port Royal, were now called from poverty and exile on earth, to the presence of the divine master they had so long and so faithfully served. They died rich in faith and good works. There is scarcely any one of their number whose life would not furnish a religious or literary biographer with a highly interesting subject. But the limits of this work, must prevent our entering on a theme, which would afford such voluminous materials. We will not however, refuse our readers a brief sketch of the death and funeral of M. de Saci^a: because the account is less prolonged than many; because he was one of the most distinguished directors of Port Royal, and of the most eminent of scripture commentators; and because, as the eminent translator of the scriptures, he is well known to the British public. To which it may be added, that this little sketch, the basis of which is taken from Fontaine, his pupil, his secretary, his faithful friend during his long imprisonment in the Bastille presents a striking

^a LOUIS ISAAC LE MAITRE DE SACI, was youngest brother to M. le Maitre; and like him, a recluse at Port Royal. He entered priest's orders, and was for many years its director. He was eminently pious, even from his youth up. His translation of the Bible is by many persons esteemed the best version of the scriptures extant, not excepting our own. The text is that used by the British and Foreign Bible Society. It is accompanied by a commentary, which appears to have been highly useful to many of our most celebrated commentators, amongst whom we may specially mention Gill, and Henry. It was chiefly written in the Bastille, in company with Du Fossé.

view of the spirit and manners of Port Royal. It is Fontaine who speaks. “ M. de Saci took up his abode entirely at Port Royal des Champs, about three or four years after his liberation from the Bastille. I had apartments at first in the neighbourhood of Paris, and afterwards at St. Mandè, for the convenience of going backwards and forwards, to superintend the publication of his bible. It was painful to me to be in any degree separated from my dear and revered guide and master, to whom I had devoted myself even from my childhood upwards; who had been the guide of my boyhood, the faithful spiritual director of my manhood, the master in whose service I was employed, and whom I had the favor to be permitted to remain with, during his long imprisonment. Nevertheless, though I had seldom, if ever before, been separated from him, I cheerfully took up my abode there, that I might the more assiduously and effectually promote his business, and the sooner return to my beloved seclusion. I therefore spent the whole of the winter of 1678 at St. Mandè, continually hoping that each month, as it rolled by, would bring my labors to a conclusion. And refreshing myself with the prospect of then immediately returning to my dear master, and offering myself to serve him for life, in any office in which it should please him to employ me.

A few weeks however after Easter, I received a letter from M. de Saci, desiring me to come over to him to Port Royal des Champs without delay.

I joyfully received the summons, imagining that M. de Saci was about to anticipate the proposal I had so long cherished at heart. I instantly resolved to give up every prospect of pecuniary emolument, and go.

I cannot describe the delight, with which I caught the first glimpse of the top of the spire of Port Royal, as I drew near to the brow of the steep wooded descent, that overhangs the monastery. God (thought I) has in loving kindness and mercy, granted all the ardent desires so long cherished in the secret of my heart. Yes, in this beloved valley, shall I find my home; to my dear and honored master, shall I devote the rest of a life, he first was the means of dedicating to God! in this spot hallowed by so many saints, shall I end my days. I shall sleep at the feet of him, who first taught me to know the value of the precious blood of Christ; my dust shall rest in peace, amongst the dust of his saints. O with what fullness of joy, did I once again enter the well known church, and, throwing myself prostrate, bless God, and offer myself to him, to do with me what seemed him good. But O how little do we often know what we pray for! God did indeed hear my prayer, and answer it. Answered it in abundant mercy, yet far differently to what I expected.

As soon as I entered M. de Saci's study, he arose and tenderly and closely embraced me, with an expression of emotion which he was not wont to betray; and which his habitual calmness and

tranquillity rendered very unusual. At length I had courage to make my proposal; but what was my astonishment, when he replied in evident surprise, “How? is it possible you do not know, that M. de Harley, the archbishop of Paris, was here yesterday; (May 17, 1679,) and has given notice to every one of us, to retire from hence for ever, within a week.” The tears came into my eyes, but I could not answer, so totally unexpected was this blow.

Having however obtained a comfortable sum, by copying manuscripts, and by having been employed as a professor in the Port Royal schools; I now blessed God, who had thus put it into my power to ask the dear and revered master, to whom all my life, I had been so deeply indebted, to do me the favor to come and reside with me at St. Mandé; and to repose his declining years with one who so deeply owed him a pupil’s reverence, and more than a child’s affection. Yet I had not courage at once to make this request, to one so very greatly my superior, and to whom I owed such continual obligation. My dear master seeing my heart wrung, said, “Yes, my dear friend, so it is! we have often blessed God for having made us the means of usefulness to others; let us now bless him, for managing for us a retreat, which by his grace may be so useful to ourselves. Alas! how much do even the most holy and best of servants, need of purification. How much more so do we. Our spiritual fathers, M. de St. Cyran, M. de Singlin, M. Rebours, M. Dumont; all

saints, all chosen faithful servants ; yet after they had served their long and arduous day, had each of them the favor to have a way opened to them (for a favor it was, though opened by persecution) to prepare themselves in their latter days, for their entrance into the immediate presence of God. It was the voice of the Lord, though speaking through the mouths of their enemies ; yet speaking in tender mercy, for their good. Surely then if they reaped that blessing, and found it to be so when uttered by an enemy who had no legitimate authority ; how, shall we not listen to him, even more willingly, when he speaks to us by the mouth of our ecclesiastical superior ?” He added much more, which my emotion prevented me from distinctly remembering. But as he spoke, my soul became tranquillized, and returned to its rest. When he ceased, I besought him to do me the honor to come and dwell with me at St. Mandè. I told him that I had taken a large house there, to which was attached a neat and commodious chapel ; and that I had beguiled the hours of my long separation from Port Royal, by furnishing it in a plain, but commodious manner ; on purpose to have it in my power to receive there, any of my dear fathers in Christ, should either business require their temporary residence in the proximity of Paris ; or should any new persecution arise, to scatter them from their beloved seclusion. I warmly urged my suit, and, I observed with inexpressible joy, that his choice would have been to comply ; but he was afterwards so strongly urged

to fix his abode at Pomponne,^b that he could not refuse ; either consistently with propriety to so near a relation as M. de Pomponne, or with a due regard for what might yet be done, through his medium, to delay the final extinction of Port Royal. He retired then to Pomponne, where I often visited him, and where he lived in a small cottage in profound seclusion. M. de Luzanci, the brother of the Mère Angèlique de St. Jean, (and like myself his pupil and friend) shared his retreat. His time was chiefly spent in prayer, and in writing. Many of his most valuable works were either composed or revised in this solitude. M. de Luzanci, whose modesty withheld him from undertaking works of his own, assisted in transcribing : and superintended the printing and publication. How nothing is lost which is done in obedience to the will of God, which can pour an equal blessing either on social or solitary duties.

When M. de Saci's path was appointed by God at Port Royal, he shone as a light amidst those bright luminaries. Numbers of the rising generation educated in their schools, of recluses retired at les Granges, and of holy nuns, and of friends of Port Royal, looked to him for direction ; and all those multitudes, holy and enlightened as they were, would have exerted every nerve to prevent M. de Saci's banishment ; and considered his imprisonment in the Bastille, and his exile at

^b The estate of M. de Pomponne, brother to the abbess Angèlique de St. Jean, first cousin to M. de Saci, and first minister of state to Louis XIV.

Pomponne, as the greatest blow that vital religion could receive. Yet how different are the ways of God to ours ! it is to that very imprisonment in the Bastille, we are indebted for his invaluable translation and comment on the bible. To his exile, we likewise owe many of his spiritual letters, and the most excellent of his works. That voice with which he spake amidst his disciples in the days of his publicity, is passed away with them from the earth ; and it is from the very entombment of the exile they most apprehended, that his usefulness has acquired permanence ; and that he is enabled to make that voice of wisdom and of evangelical truth, still heard, amidst the remoteness of distant centuries.

M. de Saci, having received a handsome annuity from the Duchess of Longueville, disposed of a considerable part of it in forming a library, with a view to lend books to those destitute of the means of procuring them. The remainder he spent in buying and distributing books to poor, but devoted, ecclesiastics. The last time I saw him, being then at the advanced age of seventy-one years ; he requested me to select from his library, all the books I might like to have, as he intended leaving his library to M. du Fossè ; but wished in the mean time to make me a handsome present of books he had himself used, and which he meant afterwards to replace.

* This is the French translation circulated by the Bible Society ; it has been generally esteemed the best extant, and that not excepting our own excellent one.

For four years, M. de Saci continued in his retirement, daily increasing in piety and humility. In the summer of 1683, he was seized with a violent attack of fever, so that his life was despaired of.

When his illness was known, all his friends flocked from every quarter once more to see him. But as there were such multitudes, to whom his labors had been useful, and who all once more wished to see their spiritual Father, the physicians found it necessary to issue an order, to admit no one. I was amongst the number of those who came : I had imagined that my long attachment of forty years ; that my having been with him from my boyhood, almost as a servant, a son, and a friend ; that my having nursed him in similar illnesses, during his imprisonment, would have excepted me. But he was not in a state to be consulted, and the friends then about him, knew not Port Royal, nor our relations to each other. They meant to be faithful, and I too, amongst the common company of well wishers, was denied. This did indeed cut me to the heart. Often when I considered the disparity of our years, had I, though with deep pain, contemplated his death : but I thought, at least, that I, his pupil, and in affection as his child, should nurse him in his sickness, and close my honored father's eyes. This then was an unexpected stroke. I mention it, because I have ever found, that when God sees fit to try us, he appoints those circumstances in our trials, which shall really answer the purpose he intended, of probing our hearts and proving of

a truth, what manner of spirit we are actually of. Nor have I in the course of a long life, ever found that seeking to bear trials, by endeavouring to anticipate their circumstances ever availed me ; or could be a substitute for a heart truly dedicated to the will of God, and from a genuine love to him, plastic to any circumstances he may see good to bring us. The feelings which agonized my heart during this period, I cannot describe. This however I felt sure of, that so heavy a chastisement would not have been inflicted, but to produce an equally important blessing. My apprehensions however proved groundless ; the fever was assuaged. And as soon as my dear master was better, he wrote me a most kind letter, which quite consoled me for my disappointment ; and requested me to come, and spend a few days with him immediately. I did so, and the kind manner in which he received me, will never be effaced from my memory. Although I then little thought, he had but one single week to live.

On entering the room, my saint-like master came forward with an affectionate smile to embrace me. I threw myself at his feet, where I had never thought to have prostrated myself again, and clasped his knees, to implore a benediction, but tears choked my utterance. We both wept, and he closely embraced me, and held me long in his arms, exclaiming, as Paul to Timothy, “ My son in the gospel of Christ, and in faithful and dutiful affection my son !”

On looking back to this visit, so near the conclu-

sion of his life, I voluntarily thought, that in some measure he might be said to copy his divine master, who having loved his own, loved them to the end. M. de Saci said he was deeply grieved they had in his illness kept him from one so particularly his own. This sentence at once seemed to overpay all I had felt. In this last visit it was so delightful to see him once more, that I can scarcely remember distinctly what passed; though I shall never forget the sweet and holy impression.

And now I must enter upon the painful recital of his death, at which I was not present.

A few days before that event, a general jubilee took place; as though God would open to his servant all the treasures of his grace on earth, before he took him to behold his glory in heaven. The jubilee concluded on the last day of 1683, and M. de Saci expired on the 4th of January, 1684. On the day preceding (the third) he had, as usual, performed the daily service in the domestic chapel. He on that day entered into it, not merely with his usual deep devotion and recollection, but with such uncommon expression of earnest fervor, that a person present, whilst he repeated the “*Domine non sum dignus*” and the “*Agnus Dei*,” said that his very countenance seemed to beam with light, and joy, and peace.

Like Stephen, he was looking upwards stedfastly to heaven, beholding Jesus at the right hand of God; and like him, his face shone as an angel's, with the reflected glory. He seemed as though he saw him whom he addressed, face to face. Yet

whilst his spirit was filled with this divine fervor, his soul was in truth expanding her angel wings, to rise and meet her God. The weather was intensely cold ; and at the conclusion of the service, no sooner had he passed the threshold of the chapel, than he fainted. It was a considerable time before he could be restored. At twelve o'clock, which was the dinner hour, he however sufficiently recovered to take his usual seat at table. He at first indeed appeared very feeble, but he gradually revived, and before the meal was concluded, appeared as well as he had usually been, since his recovery from the severe fever before mentioned. An hour after dinner he began, or more exactly speaking seemed to slide unpremeditatedly into, a spiritual discourse, which imperceptibly became more and more animated ; so that it seemed to the whole family, who were still sitting round the fire side, (as was their custom after dinner,) as though the whole fountains of his heart and soul were broken up, and poured in one full tide of deep and holy inspiration and heavenly eloquence. He had begun on the subject of the office of the day, concerning which some question had been addressed to him ; but he soon turned to that of the unsearchable riches and treasures of Christ ; a subject always inexhaustible to him ; and now he seemed animated with an almost supernatural impulse. It seemed like a ship, which setting out from the shore, at first is towed along in shallow water, till being once launched fairly in the deep ocean, she spreads her ample canvas ;

the breath of heaven inflates her sails ; the sun plays on her masts ; and she speeds her glorious and exulting course, as in an ocean of light. So it was this day with M. de Saci, when he once entered on this subject. It seemed as though a view of heavenly glory opened to his soul, he seemed transported with holy awe, zeal, and love ; his countenance became illumined, like that of a seraph, and an awful and divinely majestic eloquence flowed from his lips, and overflowed and penetrated every heart. Did some secret presentiment thus carry him almost beyond the limit of mortal bounds ? Do the souls of the saints of God, thus on the confines of this nether world, inhale a heavenly air, and behold a ray of glory from heaven's opening gates that we cannot yet discern ? Does she hear a voice from the heavenly Jerusalem she is entering, we cannot hear ? However this may be, it is certain, that for two whole hours he held every heart enwrappcd, every ear fixed, and every soul entranced, by these, the last words he was ever, as a minister, to pronounce amongst men. On concluding, he arose and quitted the room, leaving his audience penetrated to the heart. A deep silence of many minutes ensued. Not one person seemed willing to desecrate the powerful impression, by breaking the silence, with any common speech. Till at length, Madame Hyppolyte who kept M. de Saci's house, first broke it, by saying in a tone of deep penetration these few words, " Believe me, every one of you who hear me ; such a voice as we have now

heard is never uttered amongst men, but from the lips of one on the verge of heavenly glory.”

Scarcely had she uttered the words, when she was suddenly summoned to M. de Saci, who had again swooned. M. de Saci was once more taken to that bed, from which he never again rose. His fever was rekindled with redoubled violence. That night, so eventful to Port Royal, was spent in trying every remedy which the affection and skill of his friends and physicians could devise. But the malignity of the disease baffled all their efforts. M. de Saci, who felt that the hour was come when his earthly exile was drawing to its conclusion, requested to partake of the sacrament. And with eyes sparkling, not so much with the excitement of violent fever, as with the supernatural fire of divine grace and love he administered it to himself. Then, in a most heart affecting prayer, he fervently recommended all his friends, and all his disciples and spiritual children, to God. All the nuns of Port Royal, and all the recluses, were mentioned by name. And amongst them, he kindly did me the honor, I was told, especially to mention me. Then lying down, he prepared for death. Tears of love, and gratitude, and humility, flowed from his eyes, at the thoughts of his own vileness, and at the greatness of the redemption of Christ, and the inestimable price of his precious blood, at which it was procured. As for me, I know it was a most precious and undeserved token, that he should deign to think at all of me, at such a moment. But it seemed as

though this excellent pastor, who in all things sought to follow his blessed master's steps in life, was also to follow them in his disappearance from men. And as Jesus was parted from his disciples on the mount of Olives, blessing them, so did this his servant quit his spiritual children on earth, in the act of praying a benediction from the same Jesus, upon that part of his great flock entrusted to him, yea even on the most obscure of them, as for example on myself. Many will no doubt wonder that a man of his eminent celebrity, should in the very shade and jaws of death, have thought of or mentioned such an obscure individual ; but I can myself readily account for it ; for the faithful pastor treading in the steps of him, who is eminently the good pastor ; yet more tenderly seeks out the feeble of his flock, and carries the little ones, the more closely in his compassionate bosom.

All M. de Saci's friends were thunderstruck at his sudden death. A death which seemed no less a death blow to the cause of Port Royal, than a loss to friendship. But to no one, perhaps, was the shock so great, as to myself who had seen him eight days before in perfect health. There was not one amidst his numerous flock who did not long to go instantly to Pomponne, once more to behold him dead, at whose feet they had so long sat as disciples, while he was living. But prudence peremptorily forbade this last testimony of affection. We all knew that the least symptom of such an intention would have immediately sealed

the ruin of Port Royal, and the rigorous imprisonment of all its friends.

M. de Saci had marked in his will, that he desired to be interred at Port Royal des Champs. That his body might rest amongst those to whom he had for so many years filled the office of director ; and amongst whom his heart had ever dwelt. It was impossible to avoid passing through Paris, in translating the body from Pomponne to Port Royal. Yet the greatest fears were entertained, both by those well informed of the dispositions of the court, as well as by the abbess and the nuns, that it would be stopped by the police officers, were it discovered. Many ladies of distinction, especially the duchess of Lesdiguières, had wished to give M. de Saci a testimonial of respect, by sending processions bearing torches to meet the funeral at the gate of St. Antoine, and to accompany it through the city to the church of St Jacques du Haut-pas ; for the corpse was to be privately deposited there for the night, in order to proceed next day to Port Royal des Champs, which is distant eighteen miles from Paris.

Those however who had the management of the transaction, found it indispensable to avoid all publicity, since it was more than rumoured that the police were about to issue orders, not to suffer the body to pass. It was on this account brought with the utmost secrecy to St. Jacques. No information was afforded but to immediate friends ; and this great and good man, who had been the means of supplying catholic christendom with the

scriptures, and of effecting the conversion of so many thousands ; whose eloquence, whose piety, whose learning, whose eminent wisdom, meekness, and gentleness, were in the praise of all the churches of Europe ; would have been refused a sepulture by the very city which had been most eminently blessed by being the scene of his labors ; had not the zeal and courage of a few faithful friends, eluded the watchful malice of his persecutors. The body was transported in the shade of dusk, and was privately deposited in St. Jacques ; whilst his friends, some of the most eminent men then in the world, for piety, learning, and rank, were reduced to the necessity of assembling in various disguises, and skulking through by-streets, not habited as mourners, to the church where they undertook to watch all night, to prevent violence being offered to his remains ; and promising themselves to accompany them to the grave next day. They were however scarcely assembled in sad silence round the coffin, when tidings reached them, that the vague rumours in circulation, and the fears of the abbess, were but too well founded. They found that, in truth, the death of its victim put no period to the spirit of persecution ; and that neither the spiritual bond, nor the close ties of consanguinity which subsisted between M. de Saci and the house of Port Royal, would prove any protection against the brutal violence of their adversaries. The court party were resolved on preventing that monastery, from receiving the sacred deposit which they had promised them-

selves, ever to keep amongst them, as a consolation to their grief, and stimulus to their faith. Information was received, that it was resolved to stop the body; and that messengers were sent to Pomponne, to discover if the suspected translation was intended. God however foiled the attempts of the wicked, and permitted his handmaids to receive this innocent consolation.

Intelligence having been received, that orders were actually issued by the police; it was instantly determined to remain no longer in Paris. And although it was the very depth of January, and the winter uncommonly severe, and the weather such as to render it apparently most perilous; our friends resolved, though it was then eleven o'clock at night, to set out, at all hazards, for Port Royal. M. de Saci's sacred body was immediately placed in a plain hearse, and they began their hazardous journey, through deep snows, and wind driving full in their faces. In many places the road, which is at best a bye-road, was completely choked with high drifts of snow; in others it was absolutely sheeted with ice, so that no horses could keep their footing. The roads were literally speaking impracticable, in any ordinary case; nor could they possibly have been traversed, but for the incredible labors, and strenuous manual exertion, of the very numerous friends who accompanied the hearse on foot, and whose ardent zeal, had provided them with proper implements, and determined them to brave every obstacle in the attempt. It was a remarkably hard winter, and with every

precaution, they more than once thought the drifts never could have had a passage cleared before day-break. Their difficulties were inconceivable; all his friends, however, reckoned as nothing the fatigue they encountered; and most justly did they esteem, as one of the highest honors and privileges of their lives to have the favor to accompany to its long home, the sacred remains of this most faithful and devoted servant of God. As it happened, the very circumstances of the roads being deemed impassable, whilst it protracted their progress, and obliged them to resort to the most laborious efforts, yet probably prevented their being met on the road, or stopped. After incredible difficulties, through eighteen miles of dreadful road, in midnight darkness; at about five o'clock in the morning, the hearse reached the brow of the steep wooded hill, which immediately overhangs the monastery of Port Royal.

As soon as ever the torches winding down the steep descent, amongst the leafless trees, and casting a red light upon the snow, announced the approach of the funeral, it was met by a procession from the monastery. It was a heart affecting sight, to see the breathless corpse of this venerable and aged saint, carried for the last time into that church, where as a boy, even of six years old, his devotion had so often edified those older than himself; where he was consecrated to the priesthood, and on whose altar, he had offered up his first sacrifice. At the great gates of the church, the coffin was met by an hundred nuns, each of

whom had sat at his feet as her director. Each held a burning torch, nor could any restrain her tears, as the corpse was borne into the church, and deposited in the centre of an illuminated chapel.

I myself, together with a few more of M. de Saci's friends, who had just received an intimation, that the corpse would be deposited for that night at St. Jacques; was greatly surprised on reaching that church at seven in the morning, to find that it had been transported during the night.

We immediately set out on foot; and with hearts overwhelmed with grief, followed the long traces of the hearse, which with the trampling of many feet, were deeply imprinted in the snow, and apparently several hours before. Being at length arrived at Port Royal, we found his coffin lying in the church, and every preparation making with all despatch, for his immediate interment. Such strong fears still prevailed, that it was resolved not to wait until the next day, to perform high mass over him. Every body was gone to hasten the preparations. So I had all the leisure to stay alone, and uninterruptedly, by the beloved remains of my dear and saint-like master, where I forgot the intense cold and hunger I suffered, having set out to Paris from St. Mandè without any breakfast, and I had eaten nothing since. After a little while, one came to ask me to warm myself. I declined it. Then another urged me to dine, or at least take some refreshment. This I also

refused. I was near M. de Saci, and near him for the last time. I could not quit him. My perseverance was however doubly recompensed ; for whilst I was there, a deliberation was carrying on within the monastery ; whether they should not give him an ecclesiastical sepulture, arrayed in his full sacerdotal vestments. There was only one obstacle in the way, which was the doubt that suggested itself, how the face might appear when uncovered, as he had now been in his coffin six or seven days. It became necessary to ascertain this, before this mode of interment was finally decided upon. Accordingly, I had not been long seated at the foot of my beloved master ; when the door communicating with the nuns' choir opened ; and Madame de Fontporelius entered the church to preside at this operation. Immediately all the church doors were closed, and a carpenter approached the coffin with a hammer and other implements. As he gave the heavy stroke which wrenched the fastenings ; I felt an awe and bitter pain at, even from a principle of affection, violating the sacred, and as I had ever held them, the inviolable rites of sepulture. The lid was removed. I, his pupil, was the first, who interrupted the spontaneous pause, and passed my hand into the coffin, to unveil from the dreary mansions of death, a visage which had been consigned to its abodes for ever. And which had already passed so many days there.

As soon as the winding sheet was unfolded, and the face cloth turned back, that holy, reverend, and placid countenance appeared once more ; and

in no respect was it altered. The deep peace and stillness of death, which then reigned there, seemed but as the peace and tranquillity which grace had imprinted on it during life. The waxen clay seemed yet to bear the impress with which the spirit of God, whose temple it once was, had sealed it. Every heart and eye, was riveted on that revered and tranquil countenance, which seemed, even in its peaceful sleep, to breathe that deep humility, modesty, moderation, and unction, which his aspect while living was wont to inspire in every heart. My eyes, as well as those of all the very few allowed to be present, seemed as if they could not be satisfied with gazing on him, whom each one would have desired ever to see before him : and whom we had none imagined, we should ever more have seen on earth. Where was that fearful awe, so generally inspired by the sight of death ? But he fell asleep in Jesus, and it seemed, as if a ray of the glory of that heaven, which had just opened to receive his immortal spirit, yet lingered around its late abode. We contemplated him again and again, and were ready to speak, as though he were still living, and could still hear us ; and his disciples felt as if they wished once more to embrace their well known master, but a secret reverence withheld them ; and warned each heart, that the blessed spirit, now enrolled amongst the sons of light and the spirits of just men made perfect ; must henceforth be loved with an affection like himself, eternal, but freed from mortal frailty and weakness.

His remains were then arrayed for the last time, in the sacerdotal vestments, The usual psalms were sung, and the aspersions and incensings customary on such occasions were performed. After which, the folding doors communicating from the chancel into the nuns' choir, were thrown open, that he might be carried to the spot, which had been marked out within its walls, for his sepulture. A spot purposely selected by the nuns, that the pastor at whose feet they had so often sat, might repose immediately in their choir. We carried there his corpse arrayed in his priest's vestments, and on an open bier, through a long avenue of holy nuns; above an hundred and twenty of whom were arranged on either side, each with a burning taper in her hand, to meet him at the gates. Their eyes, though so long turned from every earthly object, could not, although bathed in tears, avoid fixing themselves on those sacred remains, which slowly passed before each of them. And each tried to retain as long as possible (in the little pauses we purposely made) the features of that holy countenance, they were to behold no more. How distinctly do I, at this distance of time, remember the very least circumstances of that memorable day. I still seem to see the long row of nuns, on either side, and the profound respect, marked by the deep inclinations every one made, as the uncovered bier passed before her. And when it at last reached the open grave, how well do I remember the principal nuns, as they disposed it to descend into

the earth, each reverently bending the knee, as she touched his hand respectfully with her lips. Whilst the full choir continued the funeral chant, with a gravity most deeply impressive, and which I reverence whenever I recal it. For my own part I was so overcome, that I felt as if my very heart and soul were buried in the grave with him. Surely O Lord, it was a marvellous power of thy grace, by which thou didst in that day, so rule the hearts of thine handmaids, as to enable them worthily to shew respect to thine highly favored servant. There was not one in all that large assemblage, who instead of uttering songs of praise, would not have willingly indulged a bursting heart, in shedding floods of tears. Nor was one voice lifted up in those noble anthems of praise, which, had not thine especial grace prevailed over nature, would not have been suffocated in sighing and in sorrow. But they were the children of grace, and thy grace it was, that enabled them to mourn their spiritual loss, by listening rather to the voice of the spirit, than that of natural affection. Nay, perhaps the very depth of their love and reverence for their spiritual father, helped to restrain their tears, and loosen their tongues; that they might honor the funeral of the departed saint, in a manner worthy the fulness of faith of him whom they mourned. Their admirable abbess, the Mère Angélique de St. Jean Arnauld, a worthy successor of her aunt the abbess Marie Angélique, told me, that “she thought it unworthy of him, to whom they

rendered the last honors, to weep his entrance into the joys of his Lord." I well remember the next day after the funeral, when I had the honor of waiting on the abbess, before I returned to St. Mandé; she left all her affairs in order to sit with me, and speak to me fully respecting M. de Saci; and to request me to draw up a memorial of every particular my long intimate connection with this great man, had given me an opportunity of knowing. But my connection with him was too near to be able at that time, to speak without deep sorrow. I expressed my affection to my dearest master with much grief; when this admirable abbess answered, in a voice grave and determined, but yet, as I well remember, almost smothered by the violence of the effort she exercised over herself; "My brother, we have now committed to earth, that of our dear father which was but earthly; it remains that in our own hearts, we suffer to pass away on the stream of time, those feelings which God has appointed only for time."

Such was the conduct of Port Royal on this heavy stroke, which bereaved them at once of their main spiritual prop, and temporal counsellor.

Scarcely, however, were Port Royal and its friends beginning to recover from the stupefaction with which they had been struck by the sudden death of M. de Saci, when a second calamity, equally sudden, and yet more wholly unlooked for, befel them. They had, in less than twenty days after, to mourn the only bereavement which

could have been esteemed a yet more heavy stroke than the one they had just experienced. Twenty days after this loss, the public was informed of the death of the abbess Angélique de St. Jean Arnauld, the cousin of M. de Saci ; and who, placed at the helm of Port Royal, as the worthy successor of the Mères Angélique and Agnès, was the hope and refuge of the whole community. Her loss was no doubt consequent on that of M. de Saci. Whilst the heart and will of this admirable and truly inestimable woman were devoted with an undivided purpose to God, her constitution had received a shock in the death of her director, from which it never recovered.

Outwardly she appeared unaltered ; she yielded to no unavailing expressions of sorrow, nor were her duties ever interrupted. Yet it soon became evident, that she who had so courageously been enabled ten years before to survive the death of M. d'Andilli, her natural father, would now not survive that of her aged spiritual one. She expired on the 29th of January, 1684, aged fifty-nine years and two months, of which she had been professed forty years and four days.

The reverend Mère Angélique de St. Jean Arnauld d'Andilli, was daughter to M. d'Andilli, and was born on the 25th of November, 1624. At the early age of six years, her father placed her in the school of Port Royal, to be educated by her two aunts, the Mères Angélique and Agnès. Here, even at this tender age, she appeared under deep religious impressions. When she had been

there about a year, hearing that she had another little sister just born, and being told they were then five, she replied, as if she had been on the eve of her profession, “ You say so, because you count us who are placed in this monastery ; but remember, we desire to have done with the things of this world, and to be no longer reckoned amongst the people of the world.” Even at the early age of twelve years, she was distinguished by so acute a penetration, and so enlarged a genius, that the two abbesses often recommended her to the prayers of their friends, in these terms ; “ beseech the Lord to bestow upon her a preparation of heart to serve him ; for if she does no good, she will assuredly do great evil.” Accordingly, she became equally a prodigy of piety as of talent. She entered the noviciate, at the age of seventeen, and applied herself with great fervor to fulfil all her duties. She was particularly led to practise great austerities, which no doubt inured her to the great hardships she had afterwards to endure, in the close imprisonment she was afterwards destined to experience for the truth. Soon after her profession, she became mistress of the scholars, and afterwards sub-prioress, and mistress of the novices. In the year 1661, the storm burst upon Port Royal, during which, as we have already seen, her aunt, the Mère Angélique, departed this life. Her niece was most tenderly attached to her. But her faith failed not. Her avocations were not interrupted, and no complaint escaped her lips ; though no loss could be more sensibly felt. One

day, a nun observing the tears trickling down her cheeks, as she sought to proceed with tranquillity in her occupation, said, “ ah ! my sister, I do not wonder you feel our irreparable loss !” The Sœur Angélique de St. Jean answered, “ A christian should be ashamed of mourning any loss as irreparable ; since he possesses God, who can more than fill the place of any and of every creature !”

The Mère Angélique de St. Jean, was the support of the whole house, in the period which succeeded the death of the Mère Angélique. Her singleness of mind, her wisdom, her strength of character, and her talent for business, rendered her services of the greatest importance. She was the very soul of the house for the wisdom of her counsels, the solidity of her replies, and the force of her writings. In the midst of all the tempests which shook Port Royal, a truly sublime faith enabled her to remain in a perfectly stedfast course of conduct.

In 1664, the M. Angélique de St. Jean was closely imprisoned at the nuns of the Annunciation, in the quarter of St. Antoine, near Paris ; where she had much to suffer for the sake of the truth ; being reduced to a complete solitude, and a deprivation of all spiritual assistance, as before related. On the 2d of July, 1665, the imprisoned nuns were restored to Port Royal. On the 13th of May, 1666, her cousin, M. de Saci, was sent to the Bastille. The Mère Angélique de St. Jean wrote him a letter of congratulation, on being counted worthy to suffer for Christ’s sake.

A the end of 1668, the pacification of Clement the 9th took place ; the captives were liberated. On the 20th of February, 1671, the Mère Agnès expired, and on the 3d of August, 1678, the Mère Angélique de St. Jean became abbess of Port Royal. Ten months afterwards, the death of Madame de Longueville took place ; and immediately after, the persecution which overwhelmed Port Royal, burst forth anew. The M. Angélique de St Jean was animated by the spirit of the M. Angélique and the M. Agnès ; to which was added a brilliancy of talent, and intellectual powers, peculiarly her own. In nothing did she appear to partake of the weakness of her sex. Her very superior genius gained her the admiration of the first men of the age. The unction and piety which flowed from her lips, penetrated the heart, whilst her learning and talents delighted those who either heard her converse, attended her exhortations as abbess, or who read her works. A profound knowledge of scripture, a perfect acquaintance with ecclesiastical history, a familiar knowledge of the Greek and Latin fathers in their native tongues, added to her discourses a weight, perhaps never before equalled in any of her sex. Her works which still edify and delight those conversant with them, are *Conferences of Port Royal*, 3 vols. 8vo. ; *Miséricordes*, likewise in 3 vols. *Reflections*, offered to the nuns, to prepare them for persecution ; a most deeply experimental work. Three volumes of her *Rélations* ; and *Mémoires* of the life of her aunt, the Mère Angé-

lique. *Rélations* of the lives of many of the nuns of Port Royal. Many admirably drawn up articles, in the *Nécrologe*, and 2 vols. 8vo. on the rule of St. Bennet; all works equally honorable to her talents and piety. Besides the rare endowments which peculiarly fitted her for her post as an abbess, she was likewise gifted with much information, not common to her sex. She had a scientific acquaintance with natural philosophy, with medicine and surgery, and with the principles of musical composition. She also eminently excelled in modelling in wax, and many pieces of hers yet remain, as monuments of her very rare genius and skill in this art. The motive which induced her to exercise this talent, is worthy of record. After the revenues of Port Royal were unjustly seized, and the nuns were harassed by so many vexatious requisitions, that they had scarcely wherewith to maintain themselves, this excellent abbess learnt this art, to enable her without detriment to her community, or her other poor, to provide for the maintenance of several ladies, who were attached to the cause of the Stuarts, (several of whom were protestants) and who found themselves in destitute circumstances in France. In all the works of this excellent and admirable woman, the same character of deep piety and of capacious intellect prevailed. They all bear the stamp of humility and self-abasement, without meanness; of unshaken firmness, without pride; of an exact and tender conscience, without littleness. Her total absence from the vanity too often

inspired by superior talents, her renunciation of self-will; and her profound contempt for all worldly things; the austerity of her penance, and unshaken firmness of her mind, caused her to be regarded, even by her enemies, as a prodigy of piety and talent. One anecdote of this admirable abbess must not be omitted. The Duke of Luynes, on his second marriage, made a present of his seat at Vaumurier, to the monastery of Port Royal des Champs. It consisted of a noble mansion house, a spacious park, and productive gardens; and exactly joined on to the grounds of Port Royal. And as it was bestowed at the time that Port Royal de Paris, the gift of her own family, and two-thirds of their revenue were so unjustly wrested from them, it promised to be truly invaluable, and to form a large addition to their income, in a time of most perplexing and distressing necessity. The Dauphin being one day on a hunting expedition near Port Royal, was so struck with the beauty of the place, that he determined to ask the king to demand it of the nuns, for a very handsome remuneration. But the Mère Angélique de St. Jean, having heard that the purpose to which he meant to apply it, was an unworthy one, did not choose for the sake of any remuneration, to expose the house to be inhabited by such a person as the Dauphin meant to place there. She therefore, before the king made the request known, sent a number of workmen, and had the house completely demolished, even to the very foundations; preferring the loss

of so considerable a property, to the connivance at evil, or to treat the king with disrespect by a refusal. The king having heard of this noble action, praised it in the highest terms. Such is the short sketch of this admirable nun, “to whom,” say her French biographers, “no praises can do justice; and of whom we shall say no more, from an impossibility to speak worthily of her.” We will then refer the reader for a further account, to Messrs. du Fossé, Fontaine, *le Nécrologe Mémoires de Port Royal* from p. 500 of Vol. 3; also the fourth volume of *Vies Edifiantes*. We shall simply give a short sketch of her illness and death, from an eye witness, who writes thus:—

“The Mère Angélique, de St. Jean counted as nothing, the very rare talents with which it had pleased God so abundantly to endow her. And she delighted to return by a profound humility, into that state of self-abasement and obscurity, from which her talents seemed, always against her will, calling her. She especially venerated M. de Saci, who had been her spiritual guide from her youth upwards. His death was the most painful blow that could have befallen her. And as he remained after so many bereavements, as the last pillar of their house, so this tremendous catastrophe was indeed an overwhelming calamity. On hearing of his decease, she retired to her own room, and after some time spent alone in prayer, she resumed her duties with seriousness, but yet without appearing cast down. When in the hour of recreation, some of the nuns appeared over-

whelmed with grief, she said, "God has indeed taken our father to himself! He is now beholding his glory! Whilst our Lord has called our beloved father to this vision, his spirit, I think, calls us to admire the plenitude of wisdom, and of power and mercy, by which he can raise up instruments on earth when it pleases him, or take them away; and with equal care, carry on his work without them. He stops or turns the streams of living water at his pleasure; the spring of his love, mercy and wisdom, is an abyss, ever equally unfathomable, and a fountain which ever equally flows." This thought, and the profound resignation she desired to feel for the will of God, prevented one murmuring expression. She performed all her duties as before. Nevertheless her health sunk under this overpowering burden, and it was obvious, that like St Paul, she was in a strait between two. "Longing to depart, and to be with Christ, which was far better;" and yet, desirous to remain for the benefit of her sisters. The twenty-fourth of January, which was the day on which she was seized with her mortal illness, she had spent as usual, having been at matins in the night, and having occupied herself in her various duties all the morning. Amongst other occupations, she had given a peculiarly excellent instruction to the nuns. She employed the intervening time until vespers, in visiting the sick. As the abbess went down from the infirmary to vespers, she necessarily passed the tomb of M. de Saci, which had only been closed twelve days before. On this tomb

she for a time prostrated herself, and remained in prayer; on rising up, she felt a sudden and violent pain in her side, as if she had received a heavy blow. She however went into vespers, supposing it might be owing to the constrained posture in which she had been. But in the midst of the office, she was seized with a shivering fit, and although she finished the service, her voice faltered so perceptibly that an apprehension was entertained of what really followed.

The abbess herself, well understood this stroke as a call to prepare for her removal into the eternal world. "If I considered myself only," said she to the prioress, "earnestly should I desire to depart and to be with Christ; but the compassion I feel for this poor little bereft flock, cannot permit me to be indifferent to the trouble and difficulties in which it must be involved, by the event of my death before my triennial expires." Nevertheless as she trusted that if God called her to himself, he would take charge of her community, she only thought of giving him thanks for the favor she expected. Her disposition appears by her expressions to a sister who wished to take off her veil, and to help her to go to bed. "My dear sister," said she, "let me restore it to God, who gave it to me to-morrow forty years since. When we enter into a serious illness, and one from which in all probability we shall not arise, we must begin by preparing to restore our veil to him who gave it." She then said the whole of the *Te Deum*, although her sisters besought her not, on account

of the shivering and anguish which she suffered. Seeing the consternation of the community, she said, "We can more easily submit to God than to man because we have a full assurance that he does all well. Let us only wait his will, in the child-like spirit, *Dominus est*;" then entering the bed from which she never arose, she added: "Above all my children, let us never forget to sing the song of Moses and the lamb, to bless the Lord at all times, and let his praise be continually in our mouths." The shivering continued for four hours, with the most agonizing pain. Before she received the last sacraments, she wished to beg forgiveness of the community for all wherein she might have erred. The prioress perceived it, and did all in her power to prevent, and to urge the confessor to prevent her. But she persisted, and made her excuses in the most humble terms. After receiving the sacraments, she wished to collect her thoughts; but the violence of the fever preventing it, she desired that the hundred and third psalm might be read to her. Her lungs then became so oppressed, that she no longer spoke, and her mind began to wander. Nevertheless she seemed, even in this state, to preserve the same direction of heart. For the death of a young man being mentioned in her presence, who had formerly been at Port Royal, but who had again returned to the world, she was so overcome with grief, as to appear for a time suffocated; but at length recovering herself, she exclaimed, "O what do you say, O terrible and afflicting news!" The nuns in vain

tried to comfort her, thinking she knew not what she said, as she had never seen this man ; but she said, “ It is his soul that I regret, it is his soul ! O my sisters, I am on my DEATH BED ; it is *now*, I feel the INFINITE VALUE OF THE SOUL ! ” She often spoke of him, and always with the same grief. The day before her death, all remedies being unavailing, she said to the community with her usual tranquillity “ See my dear sisters, in how short a time death can call us away. Do you not observe how changed is my voice, which I can scarcely make you understand, and hear the rattling in my throat ! ” Some time after, she requested that she might not be spoken to concerning any earthly affair, that she might think of God only. Her mind being now clear and restored, she felt pain in seeing the tears and bitter grief of the community. With much effort to speak she said : “ My dear sisters, we must not look to consequences. Your hearts must follow me up to the throne of God, mine must not be drawn down with yours, to the concerns of earth. ” She then tried again to exhort her community, but was unable. The prioress having assembled a part of the nuns in the evening, in her room, besought her with tears, as their abbess, to give her benediction both to those present and those absent. Her only answer was lifting up her eyes and hands to heaven, in the words of the Song of Solomon, “ O ye daughters of Jerusalem I charge you that ye stir not up, nor awake my beloved till he please, ” which verse she repeated in latin. The prioress represented

to her that she spoke for herself only, according to her longing desire to go to her Lord ; but that her community besought her to have compassion on them too, and bestow on them some words of consolation and instruction. She only answered by the preceding words of the same song, “ *Lœva ejus sub capite meo et dextera illius amplex amplexitur me.*” She was unable to say more. Some time after, the prioress seemed stupified with the excess of grief; and when she changed for death, they seemed not to know what it was, and inquired of the nurse. The dying abbess replied : “ It is the voice of my beloved, behold he sheweth himself—he sheweth himself through the lattice—he saith unto me, Rise up my fair one, come away.”

The community being again assembled in her room, they besought her with tears, to give them her benediction. She accordingly lifted up her hand to do so, but was unable to speak. She then opened a psalter, that was presented to her, and made them a sign to recite the seventy third psalm, which seemed beautifully apposite to the situation of Port Royal at that time ; she soon after fell asleep in the Lord, without having lost her recollection for one single moment. During all that time, her countenance was almost radiant with the expression of peace, sweetness, and heavenly joy, with which her soul seemed enwrapped, and the same expression after death still remained.

After her decease the Mère du Fargis, her prioress, was chosen abbess ; she appointed as her

prioress, the Mère St. Thecla Racine, aunt to the celebrated tragedian Racine.

The Mère Angélique de St. Jean, expired on the 29th of January, 1684.

Nor was this overwhelming blow, the conclusion of the catalogue of disasters, which at this time overwhelmed Port Royal. M. de Luzanci, the brother of the Mère Angélique de St. Jean was at Pomponne, when his cousin M. de Saci, expired in his arms. At his death he appeared bereft of every outward comfort. He however promised himself some relief, in the correspondence of his sister, the Mère Angélique, de St. Jean. For her, he had always entertained a peculiar veneration ; and his fervent piety, and great gentleness, and self-distrust, made him feel the want of reposing his tender spirit, on a character of her masculine strength, and exalted but well matured holiness. Her letters always seemed to have an instantaneous and powerful effect over him. Her glowing eloquence, her pure and holy life, her solid understanding, her superior force of character, were highly revered by him ; and he promised himself some relief, by continually pouring out his heart to her, in a close correspondence. When however the totally unexpected news of her dying state arrived, it was like a thunder clap. He was so struck, that he remained for a considerable time motionless ; and was even in a stupor, incapable of speaking or of hearing. At length awaking as from a trance, he ordered his horse, and with his utmost speed reached Port Royal, just in time to

receive his sister's last breath. He returned more dead than alive. It seemed as though his heart died within him. The fire of love he had cherished for these two persons, his only earthly affections, seemed rekindled with redoubled force. It seemed as if the tempter of the brethren, was permitted to use M. Luzanci's memory, to bring back every passage of their lives to his mind, with the most acute pangs. His body, at all times weak, could not support the conflict. On his return from Port Royal, to M. de Pomponne his brother; when he entered the room, where as a child, his sister Angélique had so often been, and which his spiritual father M. de Saci, occupied, he felt as one bereft. The two last props of his house were gone. He could not speak for some time; till looking round at their vacant seats wishfully, he said, "To whom now shall we go?" Then suddenly stretching out his arms towards heaven, and with an almost supernatural animation sparkling through his tears he added, "even to thee Lord! Thou hast the words of eternal life." He sat down, but a burning fever immediately broke out. He was taken to his bed; and wishing to regulate his affairs, sent to me, (Fontaine speaks) to consult with me about them. Two days after, I arrived; and going to ask how he was; and passing by the church of St. Eustache; what was my shock, to see his corpse exposed there on a bier, previously to its removal to Port Royal des Champs. He died on the 10th of February 1684, aged 61; eleven days after his sister.

Thus did this excellent brother and sister follow their spiritual father ; nor were they the only ones who did so. The Sœur de St. Eustoquie de Flescelles de Brègy, received in the death of M. de Saci, and of her abbess, her death blow ; she followed them on April the 1st, of the same year. Nor did her friend the Sœur Magdeleine de St. Christine Briquet, many years survive them. She was the pupil of both these estimable persons, even from infancy ; the particular friend of the Mère Eustoquie, and, like all the three, distinguished for her talent as well as her piety. She applied herself after their death to arrange an edition of M. de Saci's spiritual letters, and of the works of the abbess Angélique de St. Jean ; which being concluded, she expressed that she knew her work on earth was done ; and accordingly died, on the 30th of November, 1689, full of faith and good works.

The “Lettres Edifiantes,” contain above seventy letters, written to the community on the death of these excellent persons. We shall insert two ; one is from the pen of M. de St. Marthe, and was addressed to the abbess Angélique de St. Jean, on the death of M. de Saci ; the second was written a few days after, on the occasion of her own. It is addressed to her sister, the last remaining nun of the name of Arnauld, then living at Port Royal.

Letter from Madame St. Marthe to the Rev. Mère Angélique de St. Jean, on the death of M. de Saci.

Feb. 4, 1684.

WHAT an awful and astonishing contrast, my dear mother, exists between the death of the saints, and that of those who die in their sins ! The latter indeed truly suffer death ; since they are at that awful moment, separated for ever from him, who is the true life. They become victims of the great enemy ; of the accuser, of him who was a murderer from the beginning ; they are enclosed for ever in the snares of the father of lies, the arch deceiver ! they are irremediably poisoned by the mortal venom of the insinuating serpent, who first deluded mankind ; they become for ever a prey to that roaring lion, who goeth about seeking whom he may devour ! They are for ever cast into outer darkness, where their worm shall never die, nor shall their fire ever be quenched !

But precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints ! Their departure from this earth is the commencement of an heavenly and divine life ; and by dying here, they rather live more perfectly, and become eternally and closely united, with God in Christ. The sinner who dies, dies the death of the soul. The disciple dies only to that body of sin and death, which it was the whole effort of his life to vanquish ; and whose complete destruction he longed for. He dies indeed to this world, and to all that is in it. But it is a world, from which, during his mortal life, it was his happy choice to

live separated ; and which, from his baptismal vows, he had renounced. They die as to their mortal and fleshly tabernacle ; but it was that body, which was from its frailty the cause of so many hindrances ; which was such a perpetual clog, and from whose incumbrance it was their earnest and daily wish to be delivered. They die in short, to all which was the subject of their fear, their grief, and their distress. Tears are wiped away from their eyes, sorrow and sighing shall be no more. O what an unspeakable gain to them, is the loss of this mortal life, since in one short moment, they obtain the sum of all their desires. What still remained frail, becomes perfected ; what remained carnal, becomes altogether spiritual ; what temptations still beset them, quit their hold ! They become at once disengaged from the adhesion of a thousand weaknesses ; their bonds are loosed, their earthly incumbrances fall off, and they enter at once, into the perfect liberty of the children of God ! Jerusalem above is free ! and her freed and happy citizens, are able to exercise in a more completely holy and happy manner, those affections, the seed of which indeed was sown, but whose growth was impeded, by the ungenial clime of earth ; in short, they are become the spirits of the just, made perfect. They indeed, on earth, lived as in the presence of God, and walked before God ; being attentive to follow his light ; and his love was shed abroad in their hearts, but now they are intimately united to God. Nothing shall ever be able to separate them from

him they love ! They are penetrated with the illumination of his glory. The fire of his love burns within them. Self is, in those redeemed spirits, no more ! They belong wholly, and without reserve, to God. Those who are entered upon that blessed life, are indeed passed from corruption to incorruption, from mortality to immortality ! They are a living sacrifice, a living temple, a living altar, to him who is the living God, the Father of spirits, the king of saints, eternal, immortal, and invisible. They have no other will but his will ; no other life, but in him who is life ; no other treasure, but him who is their exceeding great reward ; no other happiness, but him who is the ever blessed ; he is entirely theirs, and they are entirely his.

Your greatest consolation, my dear mother, during the life of M. de Saci, was undoubtedly that of knowing you had in him a true pastor ; one whom God had anointed with the spirit of his prophets, and who having been especially appointed to the conduct of your house, applied himself with his whole heart and spirit, not only to his own personal sanctification, but to advance that of the flock, over which Christ had appointed him as overseer.

His largeness of heart and of charity seemed, as far as we can say so of a human being, to correspond with the importance of his sacred office. The souls God had given him lived in his heart. The desire of their salvation seemed to occupy his sole attention ; and his heart and hands were con-

tinually lifted up towards heaven in their behalf, and to offer himself with them, a living sacrifice to God. His desire is now fulfilled ! and the time of his exile is past ! His journey is accomplished ! The days of his pilgrimage are over ! His tutelage and his minority are ended, he has entered upon his inheritance ! He is now for ever with CHRIST ! He then saw through a glass darkly, he now sees face to face ! He beholds for ever the Holy One, before whom angels bow ; and the view of that ineffable plenitude of holiness, perfects his sanctification. He sees the Saviour whom he loved, as he is, and he is now transformed into his image. He is now, one heart, one mind, one spirit, with the great and sovereign high priest of his profession ; he is one in that blessed community of saints, with whom there is joy in heaven, over one sinner that repents. O my dear mother, sorrow we must, whilst we remain in the twilight of sense, and the weakness of the flesh ; but let our sorrow be not unworthy of his fruition, and our anticipation of heavenly glory ; of the sight and of the assured hope of that eternal and rapidly advancing bliss, which shall soon swallow up all grief, in a flood of joy, and glory, and praise.

Let us not weep over those saints, who are entered into the joy of their Lord ; but rather mourn over our sins and frailties, who are as orphans left behind ; and may this sorrow prove salutary, through the grace of CHRIST, in urging us so to live here below, that we may still continue in heaven, to grow in the life we have imperfectly

begun on earth. Such is the example he set us, who as a servant of the great good shepherd, faithfully fed his sheep; and is now gone before to that heavenly mansion, where his little flock shall soon have the favor, one by one, to follow him. Let us indeed, often, in heart and mind, dwell on the actions and the remembrance, of that dear and holy servant of God. The blessed memory of what God *has* done for his saints, should quicken in us a trust and hope, of what he is equally willing to do for us. This is the true and genuine use of the memory of departed friends. O let us not abuse it. Let their blessed remembrance form not a tye, to bind the heart down to that portion of our earthly pilgrimage, which is gone by; and to consume the portion yet to come, with fruitless sorrow; but let us urge on our steps, with a holy speed, soon to overtake our loved companions; and be reunited with the blessed friends who are gone before, and who may sweeten the prospect, even of the glories of the new Jerusalem; by teaching us to glimpse amidst its beams of light, many an endeared and familiar countenance, to welcome us. Thus, as we grow older, God in mercy takes one friend after another; only desolating the world we are about to leave, to people for us, with dear friends, the heavenly inheritance we are going to enter. Thus in condescension to our weakness, blending natural and spiritual joy. O then my dear mother, rejoice amidst affliction; rejoice not only that our names are written with theirs in the Lamb's book of life; but rejoice also

that we have so much treasure in heaven, in those saints whom we love, and who are gone before.

Letter of M. l'Abbe Boileau, on the death of M. de Sacy, and that of the Mère Angelique de St. Jean Arnauld.

February 4, 1684.

My honored sister,

Blessed be God, the Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the God of consolation ; who is able abundantly to sustain us by the supporting staff, even whilst he afflicts us by the chastening rod.

And who indeed, my dear sister, could sustain us in these two overwhelming and almost simultaneous calamities; if the Lord himself who inflicts the wound, were not also the good physician, whose divine love and power were able and willing to heal it? Both natural affection and reason, both nature and grace, equally, to the shortness of human vision, appear to furnish their various considerations, to enhance the calamity; and which ever way the bleeding soul turns, so far from alleviating distress, they each adduce multiplied grounds for saying, “this wound is fatal! this breach is irreparable!” But my dear sister, the just live not by sight, but by faith. It is no more necessary to the disciple, to see the whole of his spiritual, than of his temporal course; he who is the light of Israel, and who has his dwelling in the pillar of a cloud, goes before, and that is

enough. This consideration enables his children to traverse the bed of that stormy ocean, through midnight darkness, which shall engulf unbelieving hosts, with as much confidence, as they would walk in the open champaign, beneath the brightest sunbeams. Yes, my dear sister, the faith by which the just live, finds subjects of consolation, even in circumstances, which to the eye of sense present nothing but desolation. We lose two persons whose eminent piety, whose distinguished talents, whose uncommon force and vigor of mind, and whom our rare and accumulated trials, rendered particularly necessary, and as it should seem, humanly speaking, absolutely indispensable to us. They were our spiritual guides, our temporal counsellors, our strength, and our right hand. But what of that? "He" says St. Augustine, "loses nothing, who possesses nothing but in him whom the soul can never lose." O let us then rather pray, that the clouds of earthly frailty and sin, may be dissipated by the sun of righteousness; and that our youth may be renewed like the eagle's, to behold him, and him only. He who truly, and practically, and livingly believes in Jesus Christ, dead, and risen again for his church; can never esteem any as really dead, but those who are living at a distance from him who is our true life, who is the source of vivification, and also the bread of life, to maintain vitality in all who have once heard his voice; and hearing it, have risen from their graves, and received life, from a death of trespasses and sins.

No, my dear sister, that faithful minister of Jesus Christ, over whose tomb we have shed so many tears; that excellent and great mother in Israel, lamented by so many daughters, are not dead any more than Lazarus! They sleep in peace, and they are now enrolled amongst the spirits of those just made perfect, who may be said not only to live, though they are dead; but to live more perfectly because they are dead. Here below, the sin and misery which cleaves even to the most faithful, may be said to infuse a tincture of death into the most saintly life. Is it indeed, Lord, to be called life, to drag on an existence here below, panting indeed after thee in spirit, but impeded by the deadly languor infused by earthly desires and temptations? Is it living, to feel continually weighed down by the load of sin and death, notwithstanding all our efforts to soar towards heaven? Is it living, to drag about with us daily, this body of death, which if we yield to, will sink into perdition and everlasting death? Does the eagle live, whilst he flaps his wings in vain, chained down to his perch? seeking indeed with eagle eye the sun, but condemned to the darkness of his mew; and fed on dead and corrupt substances, instead of soaring to heaven his native element.

The children of Babylon may seek, indeed, here below, objects of attachment; but woe to those who are so unhappy as to find them; as for us, my sister, never let us forget, that we have the privilege to be children of Jerusalem; the sons

and daughters of the Most High ; let us then suffer our captivity on earth with patience ; but long for the moment of our deliverance ; and evermore may our conversation, flowing from the abundance of our hearts, be where our treasure is, in heaven !

God forbid then that we should be inconsolable, as if we had no hope. Our brothers and our sisters, the church of the first born, are now feasting in the house of their father ! they eat the bread of life without alloy ! Can we wish to see those blessed spirits of the just made perfect, once our dear companions here, reduced to feed in this strange and accursed evil world, upon the husks, that are the food of swine ? Ah no ! rejoice, holy and blessed souls, in the abundance of blessings now prepared for you ! Feast on the wine of the kingdom ! slake your thirst at the fountains of the waters of everlasting life, whither the son is now leading you ! To you, sighing and sorrow are fled away ! all tears are wiped away from your eyes ! The miseries and woes of this life are now as a tale that is gone by ! yet if you, like the angels of heaven, minister to those who are heirs of salvation ; if you form part of that innumerable cloud of witnesses with which we are surrounded ; oh, do not forget us ! who are still struggling with those conflicts ; whilst the lamb has already given you the victory, and encompassed you with songs of deliverance. But no, my sister, never let us feel we have lost them ! Those happy souls forget us not ; love is a plant of heavenly growth ! It is

but an exotic here below, and though implanted, with every other heavenly seed, by Christ, in the heart of his redeemed ; never does it grow in full perfection and maturity, but in the heavens of which it is a native. Nor can the love of any saints on earth, be compared with that of redeemed spirits above. They know, not by faith, but by sight, the will of heaven, the value of the soul, the love of Christ, in a way we cannot do. Their charity is now a flame without impurity ; all that is natural and terrestrial is consumed ; and their affection burns with a pure flame, kindled in the flame of divine love. Never then let us grieve, either for them, or for ourselves. They are in the full enjoyment of him whom their souls on earth best loved ; and their love for us is become a purer, holier, and closer love. Whilst they lived upon earth, we might have feared their fall to the earth. Now they are secured beyond all possibility of fall. When Adam was in a state of innocence, God said to him, “ sin not, lest ye die ; ” but now he says to fallen man “ die that ye sin not.”

Let us then rejoice, my very highly honored sister, notwithstanding the oppression of heart, which nature feels ; again I say unto you, rejoice ! as seeing sin completely destroyed, even to its very root, in those holy souls, who even until their death, mourned over it, and lamented it, as their trial and grief. O rejoice with them, that God alone reigns in those, we only loved for God. “ O death, where is thy sting ! O grave, where is thy victory ! ”

With respect to ourselves, my dear sister, although a thousand reasons render us acutely sensible of the loss of these two holy persons, so closely bound to us, by every tie, both natural and spiritual ; yet let us never forget, that as the self-existent God needs nobody ; so does the same all-sufficient God, abundantly supply the place of all persons, to those who truly love him. Let us not then look upon their deaths as an interruption to spiritual communication. The communion of saints is the privilege of all citizens of the new Jerusalem. They are amidst the numbers of the spirits of just men made perfect ; and they need neither time nor space, to hear, and to succour us. Perhaps, indeed, we may even feel the influence of their wisdom, and love, more forcibly, for this separation ; which can only divide from us that which belonged to the body, and which has purified them, and rendered them altogether spiritual ; uniting them more closely than ever to our God. Elijah, on his ascension to heaven, transmitted to his disciple Elisha, with his mantle, a double portion of his spirit. Jesus in order to unite the limbs to their living head, poured out upon his disciples more light and power of the spirit, than they had possessed during his life ; so do I hope, my dear sister, that the death of these two persons we so much regret, may prove to us an abundant source of watchfulness, grace, and benediction. It is already a great favor, that it pleases God to send so many external circumstances in his providence, to detach us from this

life, and to occupy our hearts and minds with the contemplation of a happy eternity. When we remember how contrary are the movements of the natural heart to those of divine grace ; we must acknowledge, however difficult to nature, that it is a blessing, when the external providence of God almost compels us to obey the suggestions of his grace internally. For my own part, I see no outward means so likely to break the ties which bind our hearts to this earth, as a separation ; by its remaining no longer the abode of those blessed saints, who might have rendered our exile from our father's house supportable. They have entered their inheritance, undefiled and incorruptible ! They are now inhabitants of mansions in their father's house. Let us especially, who have taken upon us vows of renouncing this world ; let us examine, whether there be no danger to us, who neither love the world, nor the things of the world ; lest we should find, in the society of those blessed saints, who are come out of the world, not merely a lawful consolation, and help in our season of exile, and our path of pilgrimage ; but an unsuspecting and lurking temptation to the heart, to slide into an attachment and trust in his creatures, which belong to the creator only. If Jesus Christ once came in the flesh, a participant in our nature, to reveal himself in a way suited to our frailty, he now dwells with us by his spirit, and is to be sought by us, in that heavenly glory, where, surrounded by ten thousand of his saints, we shall see him as he is, without any danger of losing him.

Pray the God of all consolation, my dear sister, to penetrate my soul with these truths ; and that every tie loosened on earth, may be the means of more closely binding me to heaven. May the Lord Jesus soon come, and take us to himself. O happy time, when sin, which is the real source of our misery, shall cease ; and the eternal happiness of perfect holiness, shall begin ; when we shall truly enter that new Jerusalem, of which though admitted to the rights of citizenship, and obedient to her laws, we have never yet seen eye to eye. and are then not yet fully moulded into the spirit and customs of its redeemed inhabitants. Yes, my dear and honored sister, blessed indeed will be the day, when we drop this mortal coil ; and when the celestial doors, which so many of our dear companions have entered, open to receive us likewise. In that blessed land our bodies will no longer be subject to death, our souls to sin, our knowledge to error, or our affections to disorder. Truly may we say, “ the spirit and the bride say come. May every one that heareth answer “ come ! Amen ! come Lord Jesus.”

Believe me, in our common Lord, with very profound respect and consideration, my very highly honored sister, your very obedient and very humble servant,

BOILEAU, *Archdeacon of Paris.*

Such was the spirit of Port Royal in the midst of the heaviest temporal affliction and spiritual bereavements. Tried on the one hand by the

rapidly succeeding losses of their most valuable directors and friends, amongst whom were Arnould, Tillemont, Claude Lancelot, St. Marthe, and Fontaine : and vexed and harassed on the other by perpetual litigations and encroachments on the part of the rapacious nuns of Port Royal de Paris ; spoiled by constantly renewed oppression and injustice on the part of the court, and the Jesuistical party who instigated its measures, the nuns still maintained the same constancy and fidelity. Many indeed were called from their weary pilgrimage below to join the church triumphant above, but the lessening flock below still remained faithful at its post. Their loins were girt, and their lamps were trimmed, and they stood ready against the bridegroom's coming. Thus affairs continued till the year 1710. At that period the final destruction of Port Royal was resolved on. The account of which forms the second part of this work.

APPENDIX.

MIRACULOUS CURE OF MARGUERITE PERRIER, PASCAL'S NIECE.

MANY persons having expressed a wish, that the evidence respecting this remarkable Cure, had been given more fully ; I am induced in this edition, to give two or three of the various relations.

The one which follows, is from the pen of the celebrated Nicole, who was one of the recluses of Port Royal, and nephew to the Abbess des Anges Suireau, under whose superiority it took place.

The relation forms a note to the edition of Pascal's "Lettres Provinciales," published by Nicole ; with his notes under the feigned name of Wendrock. It is translated by M. Joncoux. This account then only includes the three testimonies of Pascal, Nicole, and M. Joncoux.—*Translator.*

“ For a considerable period the Jesuits have used every means to persecute the monastery of Port Royal. Their hatred to this house, has originated from various causes ; but the principal arose from that house having been long under the direction of the Mère Angélique, and the Mère Agnés, sisters of M. Arnauld ; that four others of his sisters, his mother, and six of his nieces, daughters of the celebrated Arnauld D’Andilly his brother, had there taken the veil ; and that M. Arnauld himself had for a long time officiated as priest and confessor, having found it a suitable asylum in which he could pursue his favorite studies.

The Jesuits during several years, were unremitting in their endeavours to find new pretexts for accomplishing the ruin of a house, against which they entertained a most bitter hatred ; and they were very near attaining their end in the year 1656 ; by the tempest they then raised against this monastery. The evils they had already brought upon them, appeared to have the effect of exciting their virulence still more. Their principal object was to deprive them of a great number of young ladies, whom they educated ; among whom were many of very high rank. The

storm was increasing from day to day ; and they were constantly threatened with approaching ruin. The nuns in the eve of seeing themselves deprived of their dear pupils by the malignity of their enemies and having no hope from human aid ; held fast their confidence in God ; and were not confounded in their expectation. God who is sometimes pleased to succour his servants, in an extraordinary manner, when bowed down by oppression and injustice ; gave to this afflicted house a stupendous mark of his protection.

One among their pupils, was a M. Marguerite Perrier, a niece of M. Pascal ; who had been afflicted during three years and a half with an *œgylops* (*fistule lacrymale*). The first surgeon in Paris, had in vain attempted her cure ; the inveteracy of the disorder baffled the skill of the physicians ; the sanieuse discharge had rendered the bones of the nose carious ; and the matter from her eye had found a passage through the palate ; so that part ran over her face, and part was discharging in her throat. This child was become so frightfully disfigured, as to be an object of horror to every one ; and the infection of her disease so overcoming, that those who were most capable of witnessing such scenes, were scarcely able to support it.

The surgeons were now resolved to apply the last remedy, the actual cautery ; and had apprized her father, to be present at this mournful operation ; when God by a wonderful prodigy instantaneously relieved this young girl, (then ten years old) from her disease, and her family from their fears for her life.

There lived at Paris at that time, a M. de la Poterie ; a priest equally illustrious from his birth, his piety, and his character. His singular veneration for the reliques of saints had induced him to collect so many of the most approved in his chapel, that no private individual in Europe possessed an equal number ; he had recently acquired a thorn from the crown of our Saviour. Several monasteries of nuns at Paris, had prevailed on him to send it to them, that they might pay it due honor and respect. The nuns of Port Royal hearing of it, and being touched with the same sentiments of piety ; intreated him to grant them the same favor, which he willingly acceded to. They received this precious relique on Friday, 24th of March, 1656 ; they exhibited it immediately to the veneration of the whole community, and the

nuns each in her order went to kiss it. M. Perrier having approached it in her turn; the nun who had the care of her, and to whom she seemed more horrible and disfigured than usual, felt touched with compassion for her, and told her to touch her eye with the holy thorn. The child obeyed without thinking of any thing more than to do as she was bid: but, what must appear incredible, in that every moment she was entirely cured. The passage made by the ulcer in her palate was at once closed; the bone which had been carious was restored to its primitive state; in fact there remained not the slightest trace of a disease which had been so frightful and alarming. Soon after, the physicians and surgeons, who had seen her under the disease, were sent for. They could hardly believe the testimony of their eyes; they could hardly recognize their patient, among the other boarders, so entire and perfect was the cure.

The physicians and surgeons, struck with so wonderful a cure, which the nuns had kept secret; considered themselves obliged to proclaim it; the news soon spread over Paris, and crowds of people were seen moving towards the monastery, to verify the fact. I was then at Paris, and as I applied sometimes to the study of mathematics, as a relief from more severe studies, I had formed an intimacy with M. Pascal, whose knowledge of that science, is allowed by all the mathematicians of Europe. He was the uncle of the young lady; and an unimpeachable witness of this miracle. I went like many others to Port Royal, and asked to see this child; being very glad to be referred to M. Pascal's testimony, who was a man worthy of the most implicit credit, and to that of the physicians and surgeons, and to be convinced myself, by my own observation, of the reality of her cure. Finally, to remove all possibility of doubts, the authority of the church* confirmed the miracle; it was examined with the most scrupulous exactness, by the Grand Vicaire of the Archbishop of Paris, assisted by several Doctors of the Sorbonne; they declared by their sentence of the 22nd of October, 1656, that this cure was supernatural, and a miracle of the omnipotence of God.—*Les Provinciales, avec les notes de Wendrock*, Vol. 4, pp. 321-326. Leyden, 1761.

* The very same party who had the decree already signed to suppress Port Royal.

EXTRACT FROM THE LIFE OF THE ABBESS DES ANGES SUIREAU,
UNDER WHOSE ABBACY THE CURE TOOK PLACE.

ON the Monday of the third week in Lent, of the year 1656; certain intelligence was received, that a council would be held, to determine on the dispersion of the nuns of Port Royal; of whom a list had been seen in the Queen's closet.

This assertion, the truth of which could not be doubted, filled Port Royal with alarm; the Abbess felt this stroke acutely, and offered the sacrifice of her prayers, to avert the anger of God. She retired therefore to her chamber; and said to the sister Candide, "my child, we must give up every thing, and apply ourselves solely to move the mercy of God, for unless he pity us, this house is lost; they are about to hold a council, to determine on our dispersion, and that is certain; to avert this evil, we must implore the mercy of God, day and night; to that end I go to pass three days and nights in constant prayer; I shall spend the days in the tribune before the holy sacrament; I warn you of it, that you may not be troubled, and may not interfere to prevent me. Dispatch quickly whatever you have to do; and pray to God all the time you are able, to obtain his mercy."

She began therefore on the Tuesday, to be in continual prayer; and only desisted to take her repast, and then return; and this continued till nine at night, when the sister Candide made her go to bed; but as soon as the sister Candide left her, she arose and passed a part of the night in prayer.

On the morrow, M. Tardieu came to Port Royal, and told my late sister Madeleine des Anges, (de Druy) that M. de la Poterie possessed a holy thorn that he had shewn to all the communities of the district (Fauxbourg) and if she was willing, she would bring it the next day to Port Royal. My sister Madeleine des Anges, went to find the Mère des Anges, at the tribune, and told her what M. Tardieu had said. The Mère des Anges desired her to thank M. de la Poterie, and M. Tardieu; saying "we were not in circumstances to be amused by the sight of a relique; that we could only think of prayer to God, and of humbling ourselves before him." My sister Madeleine des Anges, a little mortified, made no reply, but told it to the Mère Agnès; who said, "since the Mère des Anges; did not fully

approve, it should not be done ; that it was very true we were not in circumstances to allow of dissipation ;” on which the sister Madeleine replied, “ but, my mother, if it were brought in Friday, to be exposed at the prayer of the passion, that would cause no distraction ?” The Mère Agnès approved of the proposal, nevertheless, that it should only be passed at the hour of prayer, that no one might stop before it ; and then it should be immediately returned to Mlle. Tardieu. My sister Madeleine des Anges, gladly wrote to M. de la Poterie, to intreat him to send the holy relique on the following Friday. Meanwhile, the Mère was engaged in earnest prayer both day and night, which the sister Candide having reported to the Mère Agnès ; she replied, “ alas, my sister, we have great need of prayer,” for it was expected from day to day the council would be held to determine the extinction of their house and the dispersion of the nuns. At last, at the end of three days occupied in prayer by the Mère des Anges ; the holy thorn was brought and exposed at the prayers of the passion, at which hour Mlle. Marguèrite Perrier, niece of M. Pascal, was miraculously cured ; as is well known, by the touch of that holy relique.* The noise this event occasioned, is well known ; and that it suspended the persecution, then on the point of overwhelming Port Royal. The Mère des Anges, rendered to God thanksgivings, corresponding to the earnest and continued prayers she had offered up to implore his mercy, and avert his anger, when it threatened to overwhelm us.—*Life of La Mère Marie des Anges Suireau, Abbess of Maubuisson, and of Port Royal.* Part 11, p. 497.

CURE OF MARGUERITE PERRIER,

EXTRACTED FROM BESOGNE’S “MEMOIRES DE PORT ROYAL.”

WHILST men were thus railing against Port Royal, God declared himself in its favor, by a great number of miracles, many of which were attested and confirmed by juridical authorities. The first of these, was that wrought upon Mlle. Perrier, daughter of M. Perrier, Counsellor at the Court of Aids, at Clermont in Aubergne ; niece of the celebrated M. Pascal, and boarder at Port Royal in Paris. She was then between ten and eleven

* She was then ten years old.

years of age From three years and a half old, her left eye was consumed by a lachrymal fistula, about the size of a filbert ; the malignant and purulent humour of which had decayed the bone of the nose, and that of the palate, and fell into the mouth. This humour was so foetid and offensive, that they were obliged to separate her from the other boarders. They wished to apply the cautery to it, in order to prevent the disease from spreading further ; and they had written to her father in Provence, requesting him to come to be present at the operation. But a nun having had compassion for this child, made her kiss a holy thorn of the Saviour's crown, which they then had in the house. It had been deposited there, not long since, by an ecclesiastic of quality and piety, named M. de la Poterie, senior brother of the Counsellors of State, and great uncle of the Mères Arnauld, to whom he was related. The young patient was suddenly healed, and when the surgeon came to perform the operation, on the day which had been appointed for the purpose, he was in the utmost amazement, to see that the diseased eye no longer existed, and that it was replaced by another as healthy as the right eye. The nose, the palate and the mouth, were found restored to their natural state, without having left the least trace, that there had ever been any disease. The surgeon in going out, met the physician, who came to the house, and related to him the miracle, but added, he must not report it on account of the state of the convent's affairs. He took a violent fever at the end of a few days, and when taken with the third fit, he thought that God punished him, perhaps, for his faint-heartedness, upon the subject of the miracle. The fever left him, and he began to publish the miracle with a loud voice. This miracle after having been affirmed by six physicians ; M. Bonoard, the first physician to the king ; the two Mess. Renaudot ; M. Hamon, and two others ; and by five surgeons, Cresse, Dalence, Guillard, Meriard, and Lelarge ; it was published by a mandate of the Grand Vicar of Cardinal de Retz ; who enjoined a holy-day at Port Royal, for thanksgiving. The festival was celebrated with great solemnity. They instituted the office of the holy Crown of Thorns, although this was St. Simon's and St. Jude's day. The nuns sang the principal vespers, part of the night ; the young lady assisting therein among the Novices. The Grand Vicar came to

Port Royal the next day, to celebrate the grand mass. Clothed with his vestments, he went accompanied with many officers, to take the shrine for relics to the nuns' grate; it was laid on a small altar, and carried upon a little tabernacle which they had had made for the purpose. The shrine for relics was carried under a canopy, and during the journey, two acolytes, continually perfumed it with frankincense. The grand mass was celebrated with great pomp. The church was filled with persons who crowded to see the young lady upon whom the miracle had been performed; she was placed near the grate, kneeling upon two high cushions, in order that she might be high enough to be seen from without. All the nuns communicated at the mass, after which they sang the *Te Deum*, and the officiating priest, gave the relic to the people to kiss.

The court believed the miracle, and the Cardinal Mazarine was the first to solicit the Grand Vicar of Paris to make a publication of it. A very remarkable circumstance was, that this Grand Vicar who had received orders to make a visitation to Port Royal, the miracle having happened unexpectedly, he made, contrary to his intention; the proceedings to verify the miracle. M. Pascal, uncle of the little Perrier, was so struck by the event, that he caused her to write down all her thoughts upon the miracle, which are printed, and her sister the nun, who is the holy sister Euphemia, who when quite young had such a great talent for poetry, composed a French poem containing more than two hundred verses upon this miraculous cure: it is found in the duodecimo collection of pieces of Port Royal, printed in 1740. The father and mother of the young lady have in consequence established for ever and ever in the Cathedral of Clermont (where is seen an inscription which preserves the remembrance of the miracle) a mass in music which is still sung there on the 24th of March. We must not forget the late testimony which has been given to the miracle of Port Royal, Pope Benedict XIII. having quoted it in his homilies which he has had printed, and in which he proves that miracles have not ceased in the church. After this cure, and the feast which was celebrated in honor of it, they gave the relic to M. de la Poterie, who placed it again in the chapel. As he found himself a little disturbed by the concourse, which was so great at his house in consequence of the zeal which this

miracle had excited in the public towards the holy thorn; and that henceforth he did not perform any miracle; since he belonged neither to the Carmelites, nor the Ursulines in whose hands the relic had been for some time, he believed that it would be better to remove it for ever to Port Royal as it appeared that it was there that God wished it to be. It was no sooner replaced than miracles were renewed and multiplied. The shrine for relics is still there to this day; every Friday morning it is exposed in the church, and on other days they shew it to those who request to see it. The picture of the miracle is also in the church.—*Besogne's Histoire de l'Abbaye de Port Royal*. Vol 1, pp. 364-369.

ACCOUNT OF THE CURE OF M. PERRIER, BY NICHOLAS FONTAINE,
ONE OF THE RECLUSES OF PORT ROYAL.

THERE were at Port Royal, two daughters of M. Perrier of Clermont, brother in-law of M. Pascal. One of these young ladies, had for more than four years a very bad eye, with a lachrymal fistula; which suppurated, and sent from it corruption of so foetid a nature that the most mortified of these holy sisters, had sometimes much difficulty to bear it. They well saw what they must do to this distemper; but dared not think of it; only the idea of a button of fire, in a part so tender, and upon so delicate a young lady, made every one tremble. They continually deferred the operation, but at last were obliged by necessity to have recourse to extreme means. M. Dalence, with Bienaisè, said, there was no time to lose; notwithstanding they did not wish to do any thing in so important an affair, unless M. Perrier, (father of the young lady) were on the spot to witness the operation. They sent for him, and begged him to make haste. As soon as he was arrived, the day was fixed, which was the one following the reception of the holy thorn. The young lady on this holiday, whilst worshipping the precious relic, like the others in her turn, felt something, and as soon as she had left this ceremony she said to the nun, her confidant, who had the care of her eye, that it was healed. The surprised sister, looking at her eye, went immediately to mention what she had just heard and seen: the mother abbess requested her silence respecting the circumstance, so that nothing might be divulged. The next day which was the one chosen for so painful an operation, M. Perrier came

with the physicians and surgeons as was usual. They entered sorrowfully into the young lady's chamber, and prepared all the necessary instruments for the operation, which wounded the heart of the father, before they touched the eye of his daughter; the mothers were there, but said not a word. All being ready, they drew the curtain, M. Dalencè and the others only seeing the patient as yet obscurely, they gave her a short and very unnecessary sermon upon patience, ordered some pillows to be brought, and the surgeons putting themselves into a posture for the operation; the young lady sat up in bed. M. Dalencè looking at her eye, and seeing nothing the matter with it, was strangely surprised. He still gazed and beheld her father, and all those who were present, without saying any thing, being so much frightened. At last, after having closely examined the eye, which he had seen entirely corrupted only the day preceding; which was now so perfectly cured, that they had some difficulty to discern which of the two had been diseased "Ah!" exclaimed he, "what do I see there! My God, you do not wish me to gain my livelihood. The diseases of this house are like a bird upon the wing which flies away when one thinks to touch it. Sir, Sir," said he to M. Bienaisé, "there is here something divine; we must bear witness to the truth which we clearly see with our eyes." M. Bienaisé was as much astonished as M. Dalence and believing the miracle as he did, said that they must be prudent in bearing witness of this in public. "This house is ruined" said he: "as much as you please," replied M. Dalencè, "we must bear witness of the works of an all powerful God."

Hardly had they left the monastery than the fame of this miracle spread forthwith all over Paris. Many persons were eager to see the young lady's eye, and, notwithstanding all the care they had taken, could not discern which of the two eyes had been diseased. One cannot express M. Perrier's joy to whom every body gave the compliment of his having wrought the miracle upon his daughter.—*Memoires de Nicholas Fontaine, Tom 2, article, St. Epines, Pascal, and Perrier.*

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